

**IPI/INT500/700**  
**Research Methods**  
**January Interterm 2017**

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Meeting Location: Room 201 at VST

**Purpose:** The purpose of this course is to prepare students to write a thesis, project or paper of substance and quality in an area of theological, biblical, historical, pastoral, inter-religious or indigenous studies. Students will be made aware of critical religious terms, hermeneutic practices, and theological methodologies in use today. Student will learn how to construct a thesis statement and an argument and then to correlate these with a methodological approach suited to their research topic. The course will focus on methods, processes, procedures, styles and formats that are necessary to do credible research, to create and present publishable quality work.

**Competence Objectives:** Students who complete this course will be able to:

- (1) Reflect on the nature of research in a variety of theological fields through reading, guided practice and interaction in class
- (2) Select research tools to find the relevant data to support research on topic of interest
- (3) Present research in a specific range of scholarly formats, including proper academic, footnote and bibliographic style
- (4) Demonstrate ability to communicate research in a variety of research and publication genres, including written and oral presentations
- (5) Demonstrate familiarity with and comprehension of alternate research methods and protocols practiced in oral and indigenous intellectual traditions

**Format:** This class is scheduled in intensive format during January Intersession 2016. VST is cooperating with Carey Theological College and St. Mark's College to offer the course, with course content provided by a group of scholars from the schools. The course will be made up of a series of modules (each 3 hours in length) on different research methodologies that are used in the general field of theological research.

**Saturday, Oct. 15, 2016 (with Adobe Connect)**

*Advanced Module 1: Human Research I: Introduction\** 1-4 pm

A survey of the kinds of research done with human subjects and introduction to the need for ethical guidelines in human research. *This module will either need to be attended, or the recording listened to, prior to the January Interterm course.*

**Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016**

*Advanced Module 3: Library Research for a Thesis\** 9 am – noon (repeated Jan 14, 2017)

This module on thesis writing outlines the steps required in the process of organizing a research plan, from sourcing primary and secondary resources, to thesis organization to the thesis statement.

**Monday, Jan 2, 2017**

*VST Course Introduction (5-6 pm)*

*Advanced Module 4 Advanced Research and Writing Skills\** (6-9 pm)

Jason Byassee (VST)

**Tuesday, January 3, 2017**

Advanced Module 6 Research Methods in Biblical Studies (6-9 pm)

Shawn Flynn (St. Mark's College)

**Wednesday, Jan 4, 2017**

*Advanced Module 7 Research Methods in History* (6-9 pm)

Axel Schoeber (Carey)

**Saturday, Jan 7, 2017**

*Advanced Module 5: Research Methods in Theology\** 9 am – noon

Jason Byassee (VST)

This module is offered as a part of the January intensive modules for the respective research methods courses and requirements at the 3 schools.

*Advanced Module 9 Research Methods in Education Leadership\** 1-4 pm

This module is offered as a part of the January intensive modules for the respective research methods courses and requirements at the 3 schools.

**Monday, Jan 9, 2017**

*Advanced Module 8 Research Methods in Indigenous Studies* (6-9 pm)

Ray Aldred (VST)

**Saturday, Jan. 14, 2017 (with Adobe Connect)**

*Advanced Module 3: Library Research for a Thesis\** 9 am – noon (repeat from Nov 15)

This module on thesis writing outlines the steps required in the process of organizing a research plan, from sourcing primary and secondary resources, to thesis organization to the thesis statement.

*Advanced Module 2: Human Research II: Advanced\** 1-4 pm

This more advanced workshop on research with human subjects provides more depth about the strategies used in research and the best uses for each type of research strategy.

**Thurs Mar 9 and Mar 23, 6-9 pm** --Two 3 hour classes for Oral Presentation of research papers

**NOTE** that on Saturday October 17 there are two modules that are part of the course. However, both of these modules are available in another time or format: the Research for a Thesis module is repeated on Saturday January 16, and the Human Research 1: Introduction module will be video recorded. That latter module must be either taken or viewed before the January course, as it is required before the second advanced module on Human Research that is scheduled during the January intersession period.

**Expectations/Evaluation:**

1. Each module will require advanced readings; these will be communicated before the module in the syllabus and by email.

2. Written and oral assignments

An intensive and focused practicum within the Research Methods course will develop an understanding of and ability in writing and presentation skills appropriate to a student's field and methodology. Writing skills will be developed through the cultivation of knowledge about types of writing which address specific academic, indigenous and/or lay theological audiences and practical exercises in writing and presenting for those audiences.

Students must have completed one significant research paper from a previous course that will serve as the basis for the varied research, writing and presentation in this course. With the agreement of the original professor to whom the paper was submitted, that paper will become the case study subject for a variety of writing and presentation formats. The professor for whom the original research paper was written will also be involved as the reader and evaluator of assignments in this course.

Based on the research paper each student will

- a. Articulate clearly the structure of a research paper: state the thesis statement or question, produce a full outline that identifies ways and steps used in support of the thesis statement, write an appropriate abstract
- b. Accomplish a full editing and re-write of the research paper
- c. Research and describe the focus and approach of three academic/professional journals that would potentially publish the paper, including a link or photocopy of the author's guidelines of those publications for submission and style; describe how the paper would need to be adjusted to fit each journal; and re-write the paper in a way appropriate for one of those publications
- d. Research and describe one encyclopedia or other research tool that would publish an article on one aspect of the topic from the paper, and write a 500 word encyclopedia submission (including doing any additional research that would be necessary for such writing)
- e. Research three popular/lay publications that would publish the paper, including the guidelines of those publications for submission and style, describe how the paper would need to be adjusted to fit each journal; and re-write the paper in a way appropriate for one of those publications
- f. Prepare and present to the class a brief oral presentation of the paper appropriate for a professional, indigenous, or academic conference (presentation time: 20 minutes)

Calendar:

Jan 13	Thesis statement, full outline with arguments/steps identified, and abstract due to original professor and presented in class
Feb 5	Re-write of paper due to original professor with copy to Jason
Feb 19	Academic/professional journals (3) descriptions, style guidelines, 1 paragraph description of paper adjustments needed for each journal, and identify for which journal paper will be adapted -- due to original professor with copy to Jason
Feb 26	Encyclopedia description due to Jason, and confirm topic for encyclopedia article with Jason
Mar 11	Popular journals (3) descriptions, style guidelines and 1 paragraph description of paper adjustments needed for each journal, and identify for which journal paper will be adapted -- due to original professor with copy to Jason
Mar 9 & 23	IN CLASS: Oral papers given—no more than 20 minutes, graded on ability to convey thesis and major arguments of paper concisely within time allowed
Mar 18	Encyclopedia article due to Jason
Apr 8	Popular journal article and academic article due to original professor with copy to Jason

**Deadlines:** Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. All assignments in courses are due on the dates

specified in the syllabus for each course. Failure to submit an assignment on time will be noted in the narrative evaluation of an assignment. Repeated failure to submit assignments on time may affect the final grade for the course.

**Required Texts/Readings:**

Eco, Umberto. *How to Write a Thesis*. Translated by Caterina Mongiat Farina and Geoff Farina. MIT Press, 2015.

Readings on Moodle

**Bibliography:**

Barber, Cyril J. and Robert Krauss Jr. *An Introduction to Theological Research: A Guide for College and Seminary Students*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lanham, 2000.

Bolich, Gregory G. *The Christian Scholar: An Introduction to Theological Research*. Lanham, 1986.

Bolker, Joan. *Writing Your Thesis in Fifteen Minutes a Day: A Guide to Starting, Revising and Finishing Your Doctoral Thesis*. New York, 1998.

Booth, Wayne and Gregory Colomb and Joseph Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Chicago, 2008.

Chapman, Alister, John Coffey and Brad S. Gregory, eds. *Seeing Things Their Way: Intellectual History and the Return of Religion* (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009).

*Chicago Manual of Style*. 16<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago, 2010.

Creswell, John W. *Research design : qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, ©2014.

Dillard, Annie. *The Writing Life*. New York, 1990.

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Griffiths, Paul. *Religious Reading: The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion*. New York, 1999.

Haynes, Stephen R. and Steven L McKenzie. Editors. *To Each its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application*. Revised & Expanded. Louisville, 1999.

Howard, V.A., and Barton, J.H. *Thinking on Paper*. New York, 1986.

Kane, Thomas S. *The New Oxford Guide to Writing*. New York, 1988.

Knight, Douglas A. *Methods of Biblical Interpretation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2004.

Kovach, Margaret. *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts*. Toronto, 2009.

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Pazmino, Robert. *Doing Theological Research: An Introductory Guide for Survival in Theological Education*. Eugene, OR., 2009.

Simpson, Gary M. *Critical Social Theory: Prophetic Reason, Civil Society, and Christian Imagination*. Guides to Theological Inquiry. Minneapolis, 2002.

- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodology: Research and Indigenous People*. London, 1999.
- Spiegel, Gabrielle M. 2005. 'Introduction.' In *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*, pp. 1-31. Edited by Spiegel. New York, 2005.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- Thomas, R. Murray and Dale L Brubaker. *Theses and Dissertations: A Guide to Planning, Research and Writing*. Westport, 2000.
- Wilson, Sean. *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Halifax, 2008.
- Ueland, Brenda. *If You Want to Write: A Book About Art, Independence and Spirit*. 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Minneapolis, 1997.
- Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research: For Students of Religion and Theology*. Grand Rapids, 2001.