VST | VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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Academic Tutoring
Fall 2025
Friday 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm: Tutorial and group practice/questions
Fridays 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm: 1-hour one-on-one tutorials by appointment.

Description

Purpose

To provide academic support to students, particularly in the first year. In this innovative student support, tutoring will cover the mechanics of academic study, research, and writing. The tutorials offer active learning with applied knowledge; students will bring their assignments to work on. In addition to the topics covered below, students can bring their own questions.

Topics to be covered

- Understanding North America university culture and expectations.
- Understanding a syllabus and expectations of the professor.
- Basics of academic writing and how to use the SBL Style Guide. Students will learn how to navigate through the guide and look up specific requirements for the writing they are doing.
- What is plagiarism and how to avoid it. The proper and accepted use of AI.
- Citations, Footnotes, Bibliographies. How and when to use footnotes. The formatting of different types of sources, article, book, multi-author, webpage. Using citation software such as Zotero for citations and a resource database. Successful management of sources saves hours of work searching for an article, book chapter, or book that you came across at some point but can't find now. Students will learn how to use Zotoro to import citations, correct data, add notes to each entry and organize their sources into groups. Using the reading lists from their classes, students will create groups by course, then populate those groups by importing citations through Theolog and EBSCO searches. Additionally, students will learn how to create manual entries. The basics of databases will be covered so students can understand how the software works; what it can and cannot do. This will give the knowledge needed to make the most of the software.
- Understanding the various types of sources. What is a primary source versus secondary source. What are commentaries, monographs, edited editions, and articles. What are considered reliable academic sources, i.e. peer reviewed article in a published journal versus web blog.
- How to access various sources through the library. The VST Library Theolog catalogue is an exemplary research tool for sources in the VST, St. Mark's, Regent, and UBC libraries and worldwide.
- Genres of writing: Reflection, journal entry, sermon, exegesis paper, essay. What are they and how do they differ.

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- Making Microsoft Word work for you. Students will learn how to format their papers using Styles in MS Word. An overview of the Styles function is presented with instruction on editing existing and creating new styles. Each student will bring a paper they are working on or an idea for a paper they will be working on. They will create an outline of the paper and format it with Styles. In the process, additional functions such as the Navigation Pane and Automatic Table of Contents will be activated and engaged with. Further tools such as Find, Find and Replace, Format Painter, Read Aloud, Paste Special, Clipboard Library, Headers and Footers, Page Numbers, and References will be explained and used.

Outcomes
Students will better understand the academic expectations of their courses and therefore be able to fully engage in the content and learning. Students will gain valuable skills which will assist them in writing papers, whether 500, 3000 or 100,000 words. Their energy and time can be spent on research and content, thereby allowing them to better engage their subject and improving the quality of their work.

Schedule
Fridays 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Each week we will learn an academic skill and apply that skill in class. Students are encouraged to bring any assignments they have to the session. The last part of the class will be open for questions any student may have relating to writing, research, and academic expectations at VST

Fridays 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Students can book a 1-hour private session to work one-on-one here.

Fridays 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Students can book a 1-hour private session to work one-on-one here.

Friday September 12th, 2025
Topics:
1. An overview of the Academic Tutoring sessions.
2. Understanding North America university culture and expectations. We will go through the student handbook together highlighting the sections which refer to assignment expectations.
3. Question and answer time.

Friday September 19th, 2025
Topics:
1. Understanding a syllabus and expectations of the professor.
2. What is plagiarism and how to avoid it. The proper and accepted use of AI.
3. Question and answer time.

Friday September 26th, 2025
Topics:
1. Genres of writing: Reflection, journal entry, sermon, exegesis paper, essay. What are they and how do they differ.
2. Question and answer time.

Friday October 3rd, 2025

Topics:
1. MSWord. Overview and introduction to Styles. Students will bring an assignment to class, and we will create a style template with outline.
2. Question and answer time.

Friday October 10th, 2025

Topics:
1. MSWord tools such as Find, Find and Replace, Format Painter, Read Aloud, Paste Special, Clipboard Library, Headers and Footers, Page Numbers, and References will be explained and used.
2. Question and answer time.

Friday October 17th, 2025

Topics:
1. Introduction to Zotero, a free citation management software.
2. Students will download citations from the VST library into their Zotero library, adding collections and tags to categorize and organize sources.
3. Students will learn how to create manual entries and edit downloaded citations to conform to the SBL Style Guide.
4. Question and answer time.

Friday October 31st, 2025

Topics:
1. Citations, Footnotes, Bibliographies: How and when to use footnotes. Footnotes vs endnotes. The formatting of different types of sources, article, book, multi-author, webpage.
2. Becoming friends with the SBL Style Guide. How to use it and find specific information within it without your eyes glazing over.
3. Question and answer time.

Friday November 7th, 2025

Topics:
1. Types of sources: Understanding the various types of sources. What is a primary source versus secondary source. What are commentaries, monographs, edited editions, and articles. What are considered reliable academic sources, i.e. peer reviewed article in a published journal versus web blog.
2. Question and answer time.

Friday November 14th, 2025

This time will be used for one-on-one sessions.

Friday November 21st, 2025

This time will be used for one-on-one sessions.

Friday November 28th, 2025

This time will be used for one-on-one sessions.