

THEO5005 Faculty Student Seminar I
(On Theological Research and Writing)
Thursday 2.30pm – 5.15pm
Teachers: Dr. Leo Kwan-Hung Li
CCT T41

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce theology students to academic writing and research practices and conventions, especially those relating to analytical, persuasive, and reflective writing. Specific attention will be given to using the library, thinking theologically, writing Faculty Student Seminar research papers, research ethics in general and the problem of plagiarism in particular.

Learning Outcomes Intended:

- Students will understand the features of “academic writing style.”
- Students will be familiar with the structure of academic papers.
- Students will learn how to develop a good research topic as well as a working title.
- Students will learn how to develop a concise thesis statement and methodology statement.
- Students will understand what a literature review is and what purposes it serves in relation to one’s research project. They will also learn the skills in structuring a literature review.
- Students will learn the rhetorics of theological argument, and understand two basic patterns for constructing theological argument. In particular, they will learn how to construct deductive argument and inductive argument in five paragraphs.
- Students will be given an abstract template which highlights the main elements that s/he ought to include in an abstract.
- Students will understand how to use library resources (especially the relevant online journals & databases tools such as the ATLA Religion Database®), Google Book Search, Google Scholar Search, etc. appropriately and effectively. They will also learn to critically assess the academic credibility of digital resources.
- Students will understand how to use Chicago-style citation (both the Notes and Bibliography Style and the Author-Date System) for an essay.
- Students will recognize what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.
- Students will learn about the various kinds of writing and research projects that they will be completing—biblical studies, systematic theology, history of Christianity, and practical theology.
- Students will produce a tentative outline of an FSS paper.
- Students will understand how to critically respond to an FSS paper.

Required Texts:

- Henderson, Eric. *The Active Reader: Strategies for Academic Reading and Writing*. 2nd ed. Don Mills, Ont.: OUP Canada, 2011.
- Mewburn, Inger, Katherine Firth, and Shaun Lehmann. *How to Fix Your Academic Writing Trouble: A Practical Guide*. London: Open University Press, 2018.
- Ridley, Diana. *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE, 2012. (中譯:《一步步教您做文獻回顧》。張可婷譯。台北縣永和市:韋伯文化國際,2011。)
- Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean, and Terry Dwain Robertson. *Your Guide to Writing Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2014. (中譯:《優質的研究報告--神學論文寫作指南》。李美慧譯。台北:天恩,2011。)

Yaghjian, Lucretia B. *Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*. New York: Continuum, 2006.

吳蘭玉，呂素琴合著。《專文與論文：寫作手冊》。新加坡：新加坡神學院，2006。

李志秋、張心瑋合著。《學術研究與寫作：聖經、神學與教牧學研究手冊》。增訂版。新加坡：新加坡神學院出版部，2015。

葉至誠、葉立誠合著。《研究方法與論文寫作》。台北：商鼎，2011。

Additional Readings:

- As assigned and distributed in class sessions.
- Selected online videos on Theological Research and Writing:
 - (1) Dr. Stanley Hauerwas, How to Write a Theological Sentence
 - <https://vimeo.com/69265857>
 - (2) Teaching on Theological Research and Writing
 - -- Thinking like a researcher; Formal academic writing; Writing a thesis statement; Crafting good paragraphs; Going from outlines to first draft; Use of argument and evidence. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYRpF-ePghZ5XWoo2LleUVZPGaBkhQE5R>
 - (3) Writing Instruction Videos
 - --Introduction to Theological Writing; Thesis Statements; Methodology Statements; Library Overview; Selecting Quality Resources; Research Ethics of Using Sources; Theological Communication; Writing Style; Grammar and Mechanics. <http://www.sbts.edu/writing/>

Course Requirements for Assessment

- Class Participation: 20%
- Take-Home Assignments: 50%
- Term Assignment: a tentative and annotated outline of an FSS paper: 30%

The format and grading rubric for assignments will be upload to Blackboard in due course.

Class Calendar

| Topics | Contents | Suggested Readings | Class Activities (CA) or/and Take-Home Assignment (THA) |
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| academic writing style | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how <i>academic paper</i> is different from <i>book chapter, newspaper column, sermon, personal reflection, etc.</i> • the unique features—focused, formal, complex, succinct, precise, argumentative, supported, critical, sufficiently objective, cautious—explained. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henderson, 3-34 • Yaghjian, 89-95 • 李志秋, 6-12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA: group discussion on how to differentiate. |
| structure of academic papers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suggested structure for papers in different fields of studies. • using the "create-a-research-space" path as a model for structuring a theological research essay. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henderson, 26-27; 500-501 • Vyhmeister, 179-187 • Yaghjian, 96-110 • 李志秋, 33-36 | |

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| developing a good research topic & title | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to develop a good research topic as well as a working title from some issue of personal relevance or experience. • what originality could variously mean. • the effective use of online academic resources to check the researchability of a topic, and to narrow a research idea into a manageable topic. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henderson, 95-107 • Vyhmeister, 111-122 • 李志秋, 14-18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA: brain-storming a research idea and try using online resources to narrow it into an essay topic & title. |
| developing a thesis statement and defend it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is a thesis statement? why is it important? how to write a thesis statement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scarry, Sandra, and John Scarry. <i>The Writer's Workplace with Readings: Building College Writing Skills</i>. 7th ed. Boston, Mass.: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011. Pp 499-507. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA: exercise in recognizing good thesis statements. • CA: writing a thesis statement. |
| how to write an Introduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • various ways of beginning an essay. • 2 basic elements to be included: thesis statement & methodology statement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellison, C. (2010). <i>Mcgraw-Hill's Concise Guide to Writing Research Papers</i>. New York: McGraw-Hill. Pp. 94-104. • https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYRpf-ePghZ5XWoo2LleUVZPGaBkhQE5R | |
| literature review and the ways to argue for a research gap/agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what a literature review is; • what purposes it serves in relation to one's research project; • the skills in structuring a literature review. • the effective use of online academic resources in conducting a literature search. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ridley, chs, 1, 2, 6 (read either the English or Chinese version of the book). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THA: looking for one good sample of literature review, and tell me in point form why you think it is "good." (<i>submission: one week after this lecture</i>) |
| arguing theologically and reasonably | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the rhetorics of argument— inquiry, reading, reflection, and persuasion. • construct deductive argument and inductive argument in five paragraphs. • 2 types of theological essay: critical theological essay & constructive theological essay • rhetorical elements of critical theological essay: elements: <i>a problematic, an exposition, a criticism, and an interpretation.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 李志秋, 31-52 • Yaghjian, 36-51; 63-82 • Henderson, ch. 8 | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rhetorical elements of constructive theological essay: <i>identification, correlation, suspicion, construction.</i> • making a claim, supporting the claim with evidence, and showing that the connection between the claim and the evidence is warranted. | | |
| writing an abstract | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using an abstract template. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggam, John. <i>Succeeding with Your Master's Dissertation: A Step-by-Step Handbook.</i> 2nd ed. Maidenhead: McGraw Hill/Open University Press, 2011. Pp. 214-217. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THA: using the abstract template to write an abstract for a paper that you previously wrote (submission: one week after this lecture). |
| Chicago-style citation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using Chicago-style citation for an essay. • introducing useful software such as Endnote, https://www.mendeley.com/, https://www.zotero.org/ etc. • introducing useful online tools such as, RefWorks at CUHK library, google scholar, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.chicago-manualofstyle.org/tols_citationguide.html | |
| academic honesty | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic_honesty/Chi_hm_files_(2013-14)/index_page2.htm | |
| How to write papers in the fields of (1) biblical studies, (2) systematic theology, (3) history of Christianity, (4) practical theology, | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term Assignment: a tentative outline of an FSS paper (submission: 2 weeks after the final lecture). |

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

- Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic_honesty/.
- With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. In the case of group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized contents.
- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

- The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submission. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

Some Important Notes

- Please bring your notebook computer to class.
- All assignments must be submitted via the CUHK eLearning system. No hardcopy is required.
- Please come to class well prepared. Read and study all assigned readings before coming to class.

Contact Details for Teachers

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