

ASSOCIATED CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS
MTS / MLE / CCM 803, and MTh 890
Research Writing and the Ministry of Scholarship

Professors: ACTS Faculty (coordinated by Ken Radant)
Fall Semester, 2010
3 credit hours *

kenr@twu.ca
<https://courses.mytwu.ca/>
Wednesdays, 11:30 - 2:10

**PLEASE NOTE that this course serves multiple programs. Students are expected to attend all class sessions, but course requirements will vary depending on the number of credit hours. Please review the assignment schedule carefully to determine which assignments are required for your program.*

- 1. For students in the CCM and MLE programs, CCM/MLE 803 will be a 1-credit hour course.*
- 2. For students in the MTh program, MTh 890 will be a 2-credit hour course.*
- 3. For students in the MTS program, MTS 803 will be a 3-credit hour course. The few MTS students who still need to complete the Integrative Seminar requirements that were a part of a previous program template will participate in designated sessions.*

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to the world of academic scholarship, research, writing, and teaching. This objective is situated within a more general attempt to help students discern and prepare for their own contribution to the ministry of Christian scholarship. The course explores broad epistemological issues that shape research within the Christian worldview; it considers other specific issues and methodologies related to research writing in the fields of specialization represented by the MTS, MLE, CCM, and MTh programs; and it helps students prepare for teaching in an educational setting. Students are challenged to develop the skills of persuasion in the academic context, and to build a personal philosophy of scholarly ministry. In addition, the course prepares students for the specific task of researching, writing, and defending a graduate thesis.

II. OBJECTIVES

The course will help students:

1. understand the nature, purpose, value, challenges, and opportunities of a scholar's vocation within both the larger academic and Christian community
2. discuss the special characteristics and challenges of *Christian* scholarship, and its role in the life and ministry of the church
3. describe the general characteristics of good scholarship and their application to the writing of graduate theses (e.g., research methodologies, argumentation, persuasion, etc.)

4. analyse an argument or worldview presentation, identifying essential elements and assessing their effectiveness and appropriateness in the context of Christian scholarship
5. become more conversant with a variety of practical features of scholarly and educational ministry in academic and/or church settings, and increase proficiencies in selected practical skills (e.g., professional development planning, curriculum and course design, instructional strategy, lecture preparation, evaluation mechanisms, grading, academic advising, committee work, and publication)
6. understand the various stages of thesis production and the process used by ACTS Seminaries in assisting students through their academic program
7. demonstrate expertise in the skills of scholarly research writing (including topic selection, identification of appropriate methodology, data collection, and collaboration) through the preparation of an acceptable thesis proposal
8. Contribute to scholarly dialogue by participating in structured academic exchanges.

III. TEXTBOOKS

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*, 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

ACTS Thesis Manual, 2008. (This item will be made available in electronic form through TWU My Courses.)

Sire, James W. *Habits of the Mind: Intellectual Life as a Christian Calling*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Truss, Lynne. *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*. New York: Gotham Books, 2004.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition, revised by John Grossman. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Recommended as handy reference guides for thesis writers:

Aaron, Jane E., and Elaine Bander. *The Little Brown Essential Handbook for Writers*, 2nd ed. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada Inc., 2005.

Bell, James B., Edward P. J. Corbett. *The Little English Handbook for Canadians*, 2nd ed. Toronto: Wiley Publishers, 1996.

IV. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Readings, Attendance, Class preparation and Participation

Students will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss the topic(s) of the day. It is **essential** that preparatory readings are completed prior to our meeting each week. The grade for this component will be based on the degree of preparation for, and participation in, each week's class sessions. Consideration will be given to patterns of attendance, evidence of completion of the assigned readings, regular attempts to be involved through contributions to discussions and the

raising of questions, the quality of contributions (for example, indications of careful reading, insight and interest in issues, etc). Simply put, if you do not contribute to classroom discussions there will be no basis upon which to assign a grade for your preparation and participation!

2. Thesis Review: DUE DATE - 29 September

Each student will prepare a short review (3-5 pages in length) of a thesis or dissertation already written. The review will be submitted in written form, and will also be presented orally to the class. The selected thesis/dissertation should, if possible, be related to the discipline and area in which you intend to do your own thesis work. The review should be evaluative, considering matters such as:

- the significance and appropriateness of the topic
- the clarity and adequacy of the hypothesis
- the suitability of the methods of research and evidence of skill in using them
- the strength of the argument and conclusions
- the overall readability and effectiveness of the thesis
- the impact of the thesis on you, and its potential for the larger scholar and Christian community

Use no more than half of the paper to describe briefly the subject of the thesis, its hypothesis, its main lines of argument and conclusion, and then use the remainder of the paper to offer critical observations on its strengths and weaknesses.

3. Theology of Scholarship Essay: DUE DATE - 10 November

The course is designed to help students form their own personal philosophy/theology of research and scholarship in which you develop a clear vision of its nature and importance in your life, its proper methodology, and its role in the larger context of Christian life and thought. Each student will prepare a paper (6-9 pages) discussing their own personal philosophy/theology of scholarship. This paper should not be a simple re-statement of course content. Rather you are to outline your own views on the importance of scholarship and its place in your life and ministry. You should consider the assumptions you make and the methodological principles you will follow as you do research in your own particular field, and reflect on the “Christian-ness” and biblical basis for those assumptions and methodologies. You should also identify areas in which further reflection is needed.

You might consider dividing this paper in three sections: (1) the first discussing the nature of scholarship – and especially Christian scholarship – in general (focus on broader questions of philosophy, purpose, governing principles, and guiding values for Christian scholarship); (2) the second commenting on your own personal sense of calling, and the application of your views on Christian scholarship to your life and ministry vocation; and (3) and short annotated bibliography of sources (annotations should not be longer than three lines).

4. Scholarly Activity Report: DUE DATE: 15 December

This assignment offers a more practical orientation to the life of a scholar/teacher than some of the other assignments. The Scholarly Activity Report includes three components:

a) Participation in colloquia

Students will be expected to attend at least three academic colloquium, public lecture or conference presentations, and to participate in discussion as appropriate. The ACTS MTS/MTh program committee attempts to organize at least one or two colloquia each semester featuring either faculty members or senior students. Each colloquium is held over the lunch hour, and lasts approximately 90-120 minutes. Normally one or two individuals (faculty, students, or guests) will present a brief paper. Presentations may be followed by reflections from a respondent, and always by open discussion. More details on dates, topics, etc., will be posted.

Unless special permission is granted, at least one of the three colloquia events need to be sponsored by ACTS. In the event that ACTS does not offer a sufficient number of events look for colloquium, lecture or conference events sponsored by other programs at TWU (e.g., Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Humanities or the Religious Studies Department), or other institutions in the area.

The end of term Scholarly Activity Report must include a short one-page summary for each of the colloquia events you attended. Each summary should include (1) basic information about the event itself: date, place participants, topic, etc., (2) the main thesis of the presenter(s), (3) a few evaluative comments on the presentation (yours and/or those of others who responded), and (4) a few thoughts on what you may have learned from the experience.

b) Field Work

Each student will be expected to be involved in structured field work relevant to your program, area of study, personal goals, and anticipated future ministry. For MTS students, field work might involve serving as a faculty TA, teaching (or assistant teaching) a college or seminary course, teaching a class in a church or parachurch setting, assisting a faculty member (or in some cases a pastor or denominational leader) in a research or publication project, etc. Various types of involvement are appropriate. A suitable field assignment for this course must:

- Involve one or more major academic skill (research, course design/prep, instruction, learning evaluation, academic administration),
- Be structured and planned around a clear set of measurable goals, established early in the semester (you should be able to say just what you are going to do, what you hope to achieve through it, and what you expect to learn in the process, before the ministry involvement starts);
- Include accountability to one or more competent individual who will oversee your involvement, and who will give you evaluative and developmental feedback

Total involvement time in field work should be at least 30 hours. To make the exercise most helpful, you will plan and organize the learning plan for your field work to approximate a course syllabus (to be called the "self-syllabus"), and your evaluation documents (to be called a "gradesheet") should be set up the way you might provide students with evaluation on their work in a course. Both the self-syllabus and gradesheet must be included as part of your scholarship activity report.

The self-syllabus should include:

- A course title (what would you call the field work you're going to be doing?)
- A course description (a brief summary of your field involvement, describing what you will be doing, where, with whom, and when)
- A list of student-centred, potentially measurable "course objectives" for the field work

(what do you want to learn and how would you like to grow through this involvement? You may want to comment on what you hope to contribute in your area of ministry, too, though the main focus of this syllabus is your learning.)

- Your “course assignments” (What tasks do you plan to do in order to accomplish these goals within your field work? How should they be done? How will you measure your success?)
- A “course grading” section, listing the assignments you have given yourself and assigning a point value to each. (Possible points for all the assignments should add up to 100.)
- A “course schedule” setting out the tentative timeline in which you will be doing your field work.

The gradesheet should include:

- A list of all the assignments for your field work that you established in your self-syllabus
- A numeric score that you believe accurately reflects the quality of the work you did relative to each assignment
- A total numeric score for your field work. (This would be your assessment of your final grade)
- Some brief comments on each of the assignments you have done. How did the tasks go? What went well, and why? What could have been improved? What would you do differently next time? What did you learn from the experience? Comments do not need to be extensive, but should demonstrate good evaluative reflection.
- Supervisor’s signature (and comments as appropriate)

A detailed report from the individual who supervises your field work is not required. It is assumed that you will get person-to-person feedback on your work, which will be reflected in your own personal assessment. If your supervisor is able and willing to provide some evaluative comments on one or more of the assignments, those are certainly welcome.

Please Note: It may not always be possible to find and organize a field work assignment within the space of one semester, particularly if the assignment occurs outside of ACTS. Therefore, with permission of the course coordinator, this assignment may be extended into the Spring semester.

c) Reading

In addition to the textbooks and assigned readings, students will be expected to read 150 pages on effective educational ministry from sources of their own choosing (this reading should not be a duplication of items used for other assignments in this course). In addition, students need to select a scholarly journal in their field of specialization (*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *Church History*, etc.) and read at least two issues (or equivalent). Your Scholarly Activity Report must include an annotated bibliography indicating the number of pages read from each work, and the journal issues selected.

5. Thesis Proposal: **DUE DATE: 1 December**

Each student will prepare a draft thesis proposal according to the guidelines outlined in the *ACTS Thesis Manual* and other information shared in the course. Please bring enough copies to distribute to other members of the class.

Obviously, it is to your advantage to use this assignment to develop a starting point for the thesis proposal you will eventually submit to a program committee. Not all students, however, are ready for this step during the course. In preparing this paper, you are not required to have all the conceptual, bibliographical, and other elements in place that would be needed for a successful thesis proposal. But you should be able to design a draft proposal that includes the necessary elements of a formal proposal, which shows your ability to select and refine a possible topic, and which demonstrates an understanding of the issues that must be addressed in order for the project to be accepted.

Please note: Do not assume that the draft thesis proposal you produce for this course will be ready for submission to the MTS, CCM, MLE, or MTh committees for approval. This course is designed to help prepare you for this step, but the ongoing development and submission of a proposal for your program committee takes place upon your initiative when you believe you are ready to take this step.

Assignments	Due Date	MTS 3 Credit	MTh 2 Credit	CCM / MLE 1 Credit
Attendance, class prep., readings	Weekly	Yes (10%)	Yes (20%)	Yes (30%)
Thesis Review	Sept 29	Yes (15%)	Yes (20%)	Yes (30%)
Theology of Scholarship Essay	Nov 10	Yes (20%)	Yes (30%)	Not applicable
Thesis Proposal	Dec 1	Yes (30%)	Yes (30%)	Yes (40%)
Scholarly Activity Report	Dec 15	Yes (25%)	Not applicable	Not applicable

V. MISCELLANEOUS NOTES/POLICIES (The fine print!)

1. All written work must be type-written, *double-spaced* and submitted on clear print on white paper. Font size of the body of the paper must not be less than 12 point Times New Roman or equivalent. Page-bottom footnotes are preferred (but not mandatory). Grades ***WILL*** be reduced if the Turabian style format is not used (take special care with bibliographies and footnotes). ***NOTE:*** Here's the message between the lines: if you do not use your course work as the occasion to learn the Turabian format, and do not give meticulous attention to format matters in your thesis proposal, it will ***NOT*** be received by the program committee.

Some faculty are willing to accept submission of papers in soft-copy. (Some even prefer it.) Feel free to ask if you would like to submit electronically. Note that any papers submitted electronically should be posted to the appropriate drop box in the course website (if applicable) or emailed to the instructor as a document attachment in MS Word or some other word-processing format that will convert neatly to Word. Please do not send PDF's. Electronic submissions should always be set up with a file name that includes your own name plus the name of the assignment. Electronic papers must conform to proper Turabian standards—before and after converting to Word in the instructor's computer.

2. Develop the habit of using inclusive language – it will be required in the thesis. Failure to do so in

writing or in public speaking is often considered offensive in North America, and it is impossible to publish material without using inclusive language. It is therefore a useful habit to develop during graduate studies. Remember: your thesis will be deposited for the world to see in the National Library of Canada.

3. Students are expected to be familiar with the ACTS policy concerning plagiarism and academic dishonesty (see section 4.12 in the ACTS Student Handbook - www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html). Plagiarism will be treated as a serious offense and will result in the failure of the specific assignment and possibly also in a failing grade in the course. ***EVERY*** instance of plagiarism without exception (even minimal plagiarism) ***will be reported*** both to the registrar and the Academic Committee of ACTS, and will result in a letter included in your permanent student record. Nuff said!

4. Late Assignments will be penalized one letter grade. They will not be accepted if more than seven days late.

LETTER GRADE TO PERCENTAGE CORRELATION

First Class	Second Class	Pass
A+ = 97-100	B+ = 85-90	C+ = 70-75
A = 93-96	B = 80-85	C = 65-70
A- = 90-92	B- = 75-80	C- = 60-65

VI. CLASS LECTURE and READING SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

* NOTE: Readings that are not based on required textbooks will be made available on TWU MyCourses

Wednesdays ...	
September 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting Acquainted, Introduction to the Course and Program • The Act of Reading • Academic Mountain Climbing: Writing a Thesis
September 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loving God and the Pursuit of Learning: The Calling of a Christian Intellectual • Christian Scholarship and the Life of the Church <p>Assigned Reading: Sire, James W. <i>Habits of the Mind: Intellectual Life as a Christian Calling</i>. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000.</p>
September 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present and Discuss Thesis Reviews • Discussion of Disciplinary Specific Research Methodologies • Finding Your Topic <p>Thesis Review Due</p>
October 6	<p>“Thinking about Thinking ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Methodologies: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods <p>Assigned Reading: Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. <i>The Craft of Research</i>, 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. Chapters 1-6. Smith, Christian. “Evangelicals Behaving Badly with Statistics.” <i>Books and Culture</i> (January/February 2007).</p>
October 13	<p>“Thinking about Thinking ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations: Epistemology and Assumptions
October 20	<p>“Thinking about Thinking ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argumentation and Logic <p>Assigned Reading: Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. <i>The Craft of Research</i>, 3rd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. Chapters 7-11.</p>
October 27	Reading Week – No Class

November 3	<p>“Thinking about Thinking ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuasion and Effective Communication • Writing Wrongs: Good Grammar–The Construction Tools of Writing • Research Ethics <p>Assigned Readings: Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. <i>The Craft of Research</i>, 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. Chapters 12-17. Truss, Lynne. <i>Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation</i>. New York: Gotham Books, 2004.</p>
November 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualities of a Successful Scholar • Open Discussion Session - This forum will be highly interactive and will be directed by questions raised by students: it can include topics related to academic life, educational philosophy, educational issues and methodologies, scholarly research and publication, job search, program issues, field work experiences, etc. <p>Theology of Scholarship Due</p>
November 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to Teach Adults <p>Assigned Readings: Cunningham, Shelly. “Who Gets to Chew the Cracker? Engaging the Student in Learning in Higher Education.” <i>Christian Education Journal</i>, Series 3, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2005): 303-318.</p>
November 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting It Done (Working with an advisor, keeping on track, closing processes) • “My Thesis/Dissertation Experience: Advice from those who have boldly gone before” <p>Assigned Reading: <i>ACTS Thesis Manual</i>, 2008.</p>
December 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral presentation and review of student thesis proposals <p>Thesis Proposal Due</p>
December 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis defense – trial run
December 15	<p>(No class)</p> <p>Scholarly Activity Report Due</p>

Supplement: Important Academic Notes from ACTS

Web Support – Student Portal <https://students.twu.ca>

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. Your student email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), MAX (850 AM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:30 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University's switchboard as well as on the website <http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>. The first announcement regarding a closure will cover the period up to 1:00 p.m. only. If classes are to be cancelled beyond 1:00 p.m., this decision will be announced by the same means before 11:00 a.m. that day. Students and faculty should assume that all night classes will continue to operate. If the emergency continues into the evening, students and faculty may check for a closure notice on the University's switchboard and website after 3:00 p.m. that day.

Paper Formatting

Students need to adhere to Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format except for in counselling courses, for which APA format is used and for CanIL courses.

Students are strongly encouraged to use RefWorks (available through the library home page www.twu.ca/library) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. They will need to be aware of the need to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html or <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>. Note that in RefWorks the available formatting styles are those of Turabian (Notes), 7th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 5th edition. For Turabian, note that there are two formats – Notes (or Bibliography Style) and Reference List (a short format citation style). ACTS uses the Notes (Bibliography) format, not Reference List.

Counselling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information found at the following website. <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>.

For free online programs that will enable you to create properly formatted bibliography citations, go to <http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/> ("Chicago stands for "Turabian") or <http://www.sourceaid.com/citationbuilder/>

CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the “student” side. A hard copy is given to incoming students in the fall.

Please check with your professor to see which one he/she recommends you use!!

Research Ethics

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/academics/research/ethics/> Those needing additional clarification may contact the ACTS Academic Dean's office. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire TWU community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at TWU. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. TWU has a strict policy on plagiarism (see academic calendar 2008-09, pp. 37-38). Further details on this subject are contained in the ACTS Student Handbook in section 4.12. The handbook is available online on the ACTS webpage (www.acts.twu.ca) at the following link: www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or used as flash (self running) tutorials of varying lengths from:

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf (8 minute flash tutorial)

Equity of Access

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.