

**Course Syllabus**  
SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary  
3535 Indian Trail  
Orchard Lake, MI 48324

**I. Course Number and Title:** ST 502 Introduction to Theological Research

**II. Instructor:** Gregory A. Banazak

**III. Semester:** Fall, 2017

**IV. Day, Time, and Place:** Mondays, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., Maida Alumni Library; Aug. 28 to Dec. 11.

*There will be no class on the following dates: Sept. 4 (Labor Day), Sept. 25 (instructor will be at the convocation of priests of the Archdiocese of Detroit); Oct. 9 (each student meets individually with instructor to discuss outline/bibliography), Nov. 13 (each student meets individually with instructor to discuss rough draft); Nov. 20 (Thanksgiving break); and Nov. 27 (instructor will be attending a professional convention)*

**V. Credit Hours:** 2

**VI. Delivery System:** This course will be "presential" in that the members of the class will meet weekly in person. However, students will be required to use the Populi course for several purposes, most importantly, to take quizzes. You are advised to consult our Populi course at least once a week, as it will have announcements and other useful information.

**VII. Course Description:** Preparation for academic theological research on the graduate level, with special attention given to library resources. The skills needed to integrate new theological information with established patterns of understanding and to communicate the results of research in standard form.

**VIII. Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. express the nature of theological research
2. articulate, in a general way, differences between the various written forms in which theological research can be communicated, viz., research paper, expository / reflective essay, theological reflection on ministry, and pastoral project.
3. explain, in a specific and in-depth way, the principal written form in which theological research is communicated, viz., the research paper; and explain the evaluative criteria which the faculty of Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary employs to grade research papers.
4. identify and locate basic resources for theological research available in or through the Maida Alumni Library

5. formulate an argument of one's own by creating a thesis statement and tentative outline
6. cite sources, in accordance with the Turabian manual, in foot/end notes and a bibliography *or* parenthetical references and a reference list
7. integrate all of the above into a theological research paper

**IX. Outline of The Course:** *The instructor reserves the right to modify this outline according to the needs and progress of the class.*

0. Introduction to the Course: Academics and Spirituality
  1. Theological research
    - 1.1 The nature and value of theological research
    - 1.2 Forms of theological research
    - 1.3 Criteria used to evaluate theological research
  2. Identifying a topic of research
  3. Locating resources for research in and through the Maida Alumni Library
    - 3.1 Introduction
    - 3.2 Searching for Sources: Books
    - 3.3 Searching for Sources: Journals
    - 3.4 Searching for Sources: Internet
  4. Theological argumentation
  5. Citing sources in an academic theological research paper
    - 5.1 The two systems for citing sources
    - 5.2 Foot- or end-notes / Parenthetical references
    - 5.3 Bibliography / Reference list

**X. Required Texts:**

Kate Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.* Eighth edition. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomg, Joseph M. Williams, and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. The University of Chicago Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-226-81638-8.

William B. Badke *Research Strategies: Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog.* 5th ed. New York: iUniverse, Inc., 2015. ISBN: 978-1491722336.

Other readings will be distributed by the instructor.

**XI. Learning Methodologies:** This class is a practical introduction to theological argumentation in an academic setting. It is not a class in theology or writing research papers in general or epistemology in the discipline of theology; rather, it is aimed at developing in the

student the ability to take a theological position, offer reasons for the position, develop these reasons clearly and coherently, support the reasons offered with objective sources, and communicate this argumentation comprehensibly.

To attain the goals of this class, I anticipate three methods of instruction.

Firstly, a quiz on the required reading will be administered on Populi almost every week. The quiz will examine the student's grasp of the reading(s) required for that class according to questions given to the students about the reading(s). After all students have taken the quiz, each student will be able to look at his/her quiz and see which answers are right and which are wrong.

Secondly, we will use a lecture-and-discussion method to supplement the readings and the quizzes. A set of notes may be distributed for a class meeting. These notes will usually be an expansion of assigned reading(s) with additional insights from other sources. They will serve as a basis for the lectures and discussions.

Finally and most importantly, we will conduct practice, in class, of skills necessary for theological research that have already been discussed "theoretically" via quizzes and class lectures.

The instructor will be attentive to the diverse learning styles of the students and will adapt his teaching style to accommodate them.

## **XII. General Guidelines**

1. **Class Presence and Participation:** Students are expected to attend all class sessions. If you anticipate an unavoidable absence from class, please consult with me first. Frequent and unreasonable absences from class may result in an academic penalty and / or a failing grade in the course. Students themselves are responsible for obtaining materials distributed during a class session from which they were absent. The instructor cannot offer make-up class sessions or a private review of his teaching notes. He will mail materials or assignments to students if they have first provided him with a self-addressed stamped envelope (to be mailed the first business day after the class session is held) or an email address (materials will be sent as an attachment to email after the class session is held; only materials written by the instructor can be sent this way as he has no scanner to send copies of readings).

Students are also expected to participate actively in class discussions. This participation can take many forms: observations, questions, answers to question, disagreements, exemplifications, requests for clarification, criticisms, etc... Since it is one way of manifesting your achievement of the objectives of the course, class participation can have a positive impact upon your final grade.

In order to participate actively, you would do well to bring this syllabus and (copies of) that day's required reading(s) / texts to class.

2. **Submission of Assignments in Digital Form:** According to seminary policy, all written work for this class must be submitted to the instructor in digital form. They should be sent to his email address which is listed on the first page of this syllabus.

In addition, the instructor would also like a hard copy of all written work.

3. **Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to maintain personal honesty and professional integrity in examinations, assigned papers, and research projects. Source materials

and citations used in the preparation of papers are to be indicated by proper documentation. Copyright laws should be honored when duplicating materials. Plagiarism and cheating are a breach of academic integrity. Plagiarism is defined as: “to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own : use (a created production) without crediting the source vi: to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source” (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary 9th ed, Springfield, MA: Merriam, 1981, p. 870). Violations in this area are considered a serious offense. If a student is suspected of plagiarism, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. When the instructor suspects a student has plagiarized an assignment, the instructor may confront the student.
2. If the instructor has evidence that a student has plagiarized an assignment, the instructor should confront the student with the evidence. The student has an opportunity to explain what happened.
3. If the instructor is convinced that plagiarism has occurred, the instructor may suggest a course of action: e.g. rewrite the assignment and receive a grade or the student may take a “0” for the assignment and not rewrite the assignment.
4. The Academic Dean should be informed of the outcome of this discussion and a note will be placed in the student’s file. The respective formation mentor is informed by the Academic Dean.
5. If there are repeated offenses, the student will fail the course.
6. The student who fails a required course must repeat it.
7. A student who plagiarizes or cheats consistently in the academic program will be dismissed from the program.
8. For dismissal from the academic program, a board consisting of the Rector, Academic Dean, the student’s mentor, the faculty member(s) affected by the student’s plagiarism and a faculty member of the student’s choosing will be convened and a decision rendered. This decision will be communicated to the student by the Rector.

Cheating is defined as “to deprive of something valuable by the use of deceit or fraud; to influence or lead by deceit, trick, or artifice; to elude or thwart by or as if by outwitting <cheat death> intransitive verb: to practice fraud or trickery; to violate rules dishonestly <cheat at cards> <cheating on a test> (“cheat.” Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2010. Merriam-Webster Online. 5 May, 2010.<http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/cheat>). In short, “cheating is defined as the intentional act of breaking the rules, or attempting to achieve personal gain through fraud or deceit. With children, cheating usually refers to academic fraud, such as copying answers from another student while taking an exam, or breaking the rules in a game” (Dianne K. Daeg de Mott, Thomson Gale, Detroit, Gale Encyclopedia of Childhood and Adolescence, 1998).

Examples of cheating in an academic setting include, but are not limited to: copying answers for an exam from another student;

- a. writing out the answers to an exam beforehand and turning them in at the time of the exam;
- b. obtaining the answers to an exam prior to the exam and using them during the exam in some way;
- c. having another person take an exam or write a paper for you;
- d. continuing to write answers to an exam after the time has expired (timed examinations);

- e. obtaining copies of an exam or answer key to aid in studying for the exam;
- f. passing notes to another student during an exam;
- g. asking another student for help during the writing of an exam;
- h. using another person's paper, presentation, reflection, etc. and handing it in as your own work;
- i. using electronic devices such as computers or mobile phones to obtain answers during an exam.

(The term "exam" may be substituted with "quiz," "paper," or "presentation" as the case may be.)

3. Respect For Others: As a matter of course, the students and instructor are expected to show respect for all members of the class at all times.

### **XIII. Assignments**

1 Readings: Readings are assigned for many class sessions. These readings are essential for you to be able to understand the material of the class and to participate intelligently in class discussion. You are expected to finish the readings assigned to you before the date on which they are due. Questions will be given for all readings. Those questions, and only those questions, will serve as the basis for the weekly quizzes.

2. Weekly Quizzes: In order to (1) assess students' comprehension of assigned readings and (2) provide theoretical background for the practical exercises we will do in class, eight quizzes will be given on Populi on the required readings for each week.

Each quiz will open at 3 p.m. on the Monday before the due date of the reading and will close by 12 p.m. on the due date of the reading. For example, the required reading for September 18 is Badke, Research Strategies, 22-41. The quiz on that reading will open at 3 p.m. on Sept. 11 and close by 12 p.m. on Sept. 18. In other words, you can take the quiz for Sept. 18 at any time between 3 p.m. on Sept. 11 and 12 p.m. on Sept. 18.

These quizzes will focus on the principal ideas expressed in the assigned readings and not on details. Only multiple choice questions will appear on the quizzes. The quizzes will be strictly closed book. You *may not* use notes or a book to answer the questions on the quizzes. In any event, the number of questions and the time allotted for each quiz (1 hour) will not allow you to use any notes or books.

With one exception, you will receive a study sheet for each quiz before it opens on Populi. The quiz questions will be taken exclusively from these study sheets. The only exception is the quiz of Sept. 11, which will not have a study sheet. Since the quiz on Sept. 11 is on the Seminary's official "Guide to Academic Writing", students are expected to know everything in the guide.

Students who do not have internet access readily available to them may take their quizzes on the computers in the Maida Alumni Library; librarians will clear computers for this purpose.

The average of your grade for these quizzes will count for 30% of your final grade. The lowest quiz score will be dropped, however you must take and pass all quizzes (that is, you must receive a minimum score of C (2.0 on a 4.0 scale / 70% on a 100-point scale) or you will be

regarded as not having completed the assignment of weekly quizzes (and will receive a failing grade for the class).

3. Review of Notes: Students are urged to review regularly the notes distributed by the instructor during class, the notes they might take during class sessions, notes from their reading, and the graded quizzes returned to them. Such review can greatly aid in the comprehension and synthesis of course material.

4. Research Paper: The research paper plays an important role in academic theological formation. It assists the student in developing his theological perspective, clarifying and supporting that perspective with respected resources, and expressing that perspective in a clear and cogent fashion. Hence, you are required to write a 10 to 15 page paper for this course.

The subject of the research paper may be any theological issue that is of interest to you. You should be considering possible subjects from the first day of class. The wise student will also read a bit on the subject from the first day of class. Your paper will be the most important and most typical of theological papers: *arguing for a position*.

If you are assigned a research paper in another class this semester, you may use this class to write that paper. However, you must indicate that you are doing this to the present instructor and you must obtain the express permission of the instructor in the other class. The present instructor will grade it from the more formal perspective of this course.

On **September 11** you will give to the instructor a typed statement of the anticipated thesis of the paper to the instructor (that is, in a complete sentence which expresses your anticipated position on a particular issue). *Both* an electronic *and* a hard copy of this statement must be submitted to the instructor. The electronic copy must be in MS Word 2007 or earlier (it must end in the extensions .doc or .docx.)

On **October 2** you will meet with the instructor to submit and discuss a typed *tentative* outline of your paper with a thesis statement at the beginning of the outline, the major sections of the paper explained in outline form (in complete sentences); and a *tentative* bibliography of your paper (with at least three books and at least three journal articles). *Both* an electronic *and* a hard copy of this outline and bibliography must be submitted to the instructor. The electronic copy must be in MS Word 2007 or earlier (it must end in the extensions .doc or .docx.)

On **November 6** you will submit to the instructor a rough draft of your paper. The rough draft will have all elements of the final copy of the paper. The only difference between it and the final copy is that it will be tentative --- you will be able to correct it in light of the instructor's comments. *Both* an electronic *and* a hard copy of this rough draft must be submitted to the instructor. The electronic copy must be in MS Word 2007 or earlier (it must end in the extensions .doc or .docx.)

On **November 13** you will meet with the instructor to discuss the rough draft.

On **December 4** you will submit to the instructor the final copy of your paper in both digital and hard copy formats. Both must be in the possession of the instructor by the end of the day (11:59 p.m.). It will be graded according to the evaluative criteria found in the Writing Guide developed by the faculty of this seminary. *Both* an electronic *and* a hard copy of this final copy must be submitted to the instructor. The electronic copy must be in MS Word 2007 or earlier (it must end in the extensions .doc or .docx.). The written copy must be slid under the door of the instructor's office.

The following week, you will meet with the instructor to discuss his final evaluation of your paper.

The research paper counts for 70% of the final grade for this course.

**XIV. Grading:**

Your final grade will be calculated according to this breakdown of percentages:

70% Research Paper

30% Average of Quizzes on Readings

*N.B. Good class participation will affect your final grade positively*

**XV. Notice of Change:** The information in this syllabus is subject to change. The professor reserves the right to make any necessary changes.