CT500 CO1 Introduction to Theological Research – Course Syllabus
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary - Charlotte
Spring 2019, January 22 – April 15

Instructor
Dr. Viacheslav Lytvynenko (a.k.a. “Dr. Slavik”)
◦ Contact Dr. Slavik by email at vlytvynenko@gordonconwell.edu. He is also available by video call by appointment.

Teaching Assistant
Mrs. Ashley Stamper
◦ Contact Ashley by email at astamper@gordonconwell.edu. She is also available by video call by appointment.

Course Format
CT500 is an online course in the Canvas learning management system. There is no on-campus meeting requirement. Your primary interaction will be via Canvas and email with the course instructor and teaching assistant.
◦ There is one required video conference session (on the Zoom platform) on Feb. 5, at either 12pm or 7pm. A recording of the session will be available if you are unable to attend the meeting live. Information about Zoom will be provided in Canvas.

Course Description
CT500 introduces seminary students to graduate-level research and writing skills with specific attention to academic writing, theological research, integrating sources, understanding and avoiding plagiarism, and the proper citation of sources following the Turabian style manual (standard for GCTS academic papers).

The course also explores the nature of theological reflection and introduces students to the idea of “thinking theologically” about various topics and issues they encounter both in academic study and in the practice of ministry.

Course lessons and assignments follow a fast-paced schedule. There are frequent deadlines, with penalties for late submissions. All assignments are graded and you must complete all the reading, lessons, and assignments to receive a passing grade in the course.

Questions about Course Content
All questions related to course content, assignments, due dates, and so on should be directed to the course instructor or teaching assistant.

Technical Support
If you need assistance with GCTS technology (GCTS email, CAMS, Canvas, GCTS website), contact the IT Service Desk at 978.646.4357 or servicedesk@gordonconwell.edu. If something is not working in the CT500 Canvas site, contact site designer Erin James at ejames@gordonconwell.edu.
**Gordon-Conwell Mission**

This course satisfies the following institutional learning objective: Demonstrate constructive and critical thinking about Christian ministry in light of biblical, theological, and historical scholarship in accordance with historic Christian orthodoxy.

**Relation to Curriculum**

CT500 is a one-credit hour course, required of all Gordon-Conwell, Charlotte students. Charlotte students must complete this course within their first year. CT500 is a pre-requisite for most other courses.

**Pre-Requisite Knowledge**

This course assumes that students have taken an undergraduate writing course and are familiar with the basics of good composition and mechanics. Students who do not feel confident in their knowledge of these elements should take some time to review writing fundamentals through writing handbooks or websites. A good place to start is the Purdue OWL Online Writing Lab. [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/)

**Course Learning Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Understand foundational principles for organizing and conducting graduate-level research.
- Demonstrate their ability to develop a research topic and conduct effective research.
- Demonstrate their knowledge of graduate-level academic writing standards and process.
- Become familiar with proper citation of sources and the Turabian style manual.
- Learn how to recognize plagiarism, both intentional and unintentional, and avoid it in preparation of their research papers.
- Begin to develop a framework for ongoing theological reflection that will shape how they integrate Christian faith with academic study and the practice of ministry.

**Lesson Topics**

Before beginning the lessons, students must complete a preliminary Getting Started section and Critical Thinking and Reading Section.

The lessons are as follows:

- Introduction to Citations
- Plagiarism: What It Is and How to Avoid It
- Paraphrasing
- Academic Research: Finding Sources
- Topic, Working Hypothesis, and Thesis Statement
- Bibliography and Footnotes
- Developing an Outline
- Writing a Research Paper
- Theological Reflection and Revising Your Writing

In the final Course Closing section, students must verify that they have completed all of the course requirements.
Required Textbooks


Course Requirements

Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities. This course assumes that the best way to improve our writing is to write. So in addition to reading about writing, you will practice the craft of writing at the graduate level.

The following are the types of assignments you can expect.

Tutorials

You must complete the Technology and Library tutorials in the Online New Student Orientation (CHA Orientation Site in Canvas) prior to starting the coursework for CT500. These tutorials cover the essentials of the primary technology and resources you will need for this class. If you do not have access to this site in Canvas, please email Erin James at ejames@gordonconwell.edu.

- At the beginning of the course, you will complete a verification indicating that you have completed the tutorial requirements. This is a requirement to pass the course.

Readings

The content of this course will be presented primarily through: 1) reading of books and articles on research and writing; and 2) websites devoted to writing practice and resources. There are about 300 pages of reading from the textbooks and other assigned resources, plus reading the Canvas content.

- At the end of the course, you will complete a verification indicating that you have completed the reading requirements. This is a requirement to pass the course.

Assignments

You will have several short assignments that each focus on one element of writing or research. The first few are general, then about midway through the course, each assignment helps you build your paper step-by-step. You will receive feedback from the course instructor or teaching assistant on your assignments. All assignments are graded.

Major Project: Research Paper and Revision

The culminating assignment is a five to six page essay on a thesis statement you will write based on the topic provided in the course. The course instructor will grade your research paper and provide specific feedback on how to make it stronger. Then you will revise your paper and submit it for another grade and final feedback.
Grading
This one-credit-hour course will be graded based on the standard Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary grading policy. CT500 is a graded class that will be reflected on your transcript as a letter grade, and will factor into your GPA. The class will be based on a total of 200 points.

All assignments must be completed to pass the course, regardless of cumulative points.

Assignments and Weighting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>% of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verification of Preparation</td>
<td>P/F</td>
<td>Pass/Fail for entire course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citations Introduction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism Quiz (8/10 or better)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verification of Academic Honesty</td>
<td>P/F</td>
<td>Pass/Fail for entire course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing Sources</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WorldCat and Database Research</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic and Working Hypothesis</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography and Footnotes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline and Thesis Statement</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised Paper</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verification of Reading</td>
<td>P/F</td>
<td>Pass/Fail for entire course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>200 points</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94—100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90—93</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87—89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>84—86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80—83</td>
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<td>77—79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>74—76</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70—73</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67—69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>64—67</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61—63</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>60—0</td>
<td>F</td>
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Assignment Formatting and Submission
Writing assignments should be composed in Microsoft Word documents, double-spaced, one-inch margins, and using 11-12 point font in Times New Roman or Cambria or Arial.
  ◦ In some of the assignments that focus on the more technical elements of research or writing, you will instead work from a template.

All assignment file names should follow this convention:
FirstinitialLastName_AssignmentName_MMDDYY
  ◦ example: JSmith_ResearchPaper_123118

Submit your assignments in Canvas via the links in the lessons. You may submit assignments early. However, note that some assignments require feedback before proceeding.

Instructor Feedback
Students will receive feedback and grades on short assignments within one week of submission, and on the research paper and revision within two weeks of submission.

Course Completion, Late Work, and Extension Policy
All assignments must be submitted on time. Each late assignment will incur a penalty. Please plan ahead! Due dates are indicated in Canvas at the end of the syllabus, on the Dashboard in the To Do stream, on the course calendar, and within the assignments. The late penalty for each assignment is indicated in the grading guidelines for the assignment.

Students must complete all work by the last day of the course. Extensions are only given for students experiencing a health or family emergency, and must be approved following standard GCTS procedure.

The course must be completed within the first year of a student's program. Failure to pass this course within the first year could result in requirement to repeat the course.

Netiquette
Gordon-Conwell does not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior in the online communications in any course. Students should review the netiquette policy in the Student Handbook and this website: http://www.albion.com/netiquette.

Additional Seminary Policies
For additional seminary policies that may pertain to this course please refer to the Syllabus Addendum below.

Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s
distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over-dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

**ADA Policy/ Disability and Accessibility**
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook. Any student who has a learning, orthopedic, sensory or psychiatric condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities and who would benefit from accommodations may be eligible for assistance. Please contact the Registrar, Trish King (tking@gordonconwell.edu; 704-527-9909), who coordinates services for students with disabilities at the Charlotte campus. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the professor of the documented accommodations at the beginning of the semester.

**Cancellation of Class**
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (due to an impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email notification (via the GCTS email account) to all students registered in the affected course. If the cancellation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the Academic Calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

**Extension Policy**
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the end date for the semester or term (as noted in the seminary’s Academic Calendar) are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required in these cases. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized end date for the semester or term must be approved by the Registration Office. An Extension Petition, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the stated date. Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

**Grades**
Faculty are expected to turn in final grades by January 15 for fall-semester courses, by June 15 for spring-semester courses, and by September 15 for summer-term courses. Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.