PRE-REQUISITE

See the 2020-21 Academic Catalog (page 77):
MAR students who desire to write a thesis must apply for that status according to the following process:

At the end of his/her first semester of study, the MAR student will meet with the department chairperson in the student’s general subject area of interest. The chairperson will evaluate the candidate’s suitability for thesis work, taking into consideration his/her writing abilities based on a sample research paper; general academic performance based on previous course work, with a B+ average required; the merits of performing research given the candidate’s immediate goals and vocational intentions.

After this interview, the department chairperson will consult with colleagues in his or her department to act on recommendation of the department chair regarding the student’s suitability for thesis writing. If affirmative, a preliminary thesis advisor will be assigned, and the student will be given approval to take RW 701. The student will meet with the thesis advisor; the registrar will enroll the student in RW 701.

Continued contact with the thesis advisor is crucial to student success. The advisor will need to sign off on three assignments from RW 701: the thesis statement, the working outline, and the working bibliography. The advisor determines if the student can proceed with writing a thesis by the date that spring grades are due. There are three possible outcomes: approval to write the thesis; approval to write the thesis with revisions to topic, thesis statement, outline, etc., which are to be made according to a set time frame; or the student is not approved. Students who are turned down through this process may appeal to the Academic Dean.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Required non-credit course for MAR students writing a thesis, transcripted upon successful completion. A weekly seminar offered in the spring semester preparing students to write their thesis (RW 799) the following year. Students will learn research
methods and skills and develop their writing ability. They will produce a thesis proposal, including a developed statement of the topic, an outline of the contents, a full bibliography for future research, and a written research agreement with a thesis supervisor.

COURSE GOALS, OBJECTIVES and OUTCOMES

Goals: This class will aid students in the following:
- learning the basic skills of quality research and writing;
- clarifying their thesis topics and completing the preliminary aspects of their projects;
- becoming more responsible researchers and writers who complete work with integrity in order to communicate both to a specific audience and to a wider scholarly community.

Objectives: In order to achieve these goals, students will do the following:
- read and evaluate scholars in the theological, research, and communication fields;
- dialog with fellow students and professor about thesis topic;
- complete in-depth research on thesis topic;
- formulate a thesis proposal with a thesis statement, outline, and bibliography.

Outcomes: As a result of this class, students will be able to do the following:
- articulate a biblical theology of theological research and writing;
- understand principles of research in the theological discipline, including literacy of information;
- craft an argument more clearly, concisely, and logically;
- fashion a research methodology tailored to their thesis project;
- apply correct bibliographic forms in the SBL style.

The learning outcomes for Trinity School for Ministry are attached to the end of this syllabus and should be referred to for further information.

This course will particularly focus on the MAR Learning Outcomes numbers (2) with students articulating “an Anglican understanding of biblical, historical, systematic and pastoral theology” as it applies to one’s specific thesis topic; and (4) with students being “equipped to apply scholarship to the life of the church in his or her chosen theological discipline.”

REQUIRED TEXTS


Two book-length secondary sources in the student’s field of study

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Weekly assignments** – there will be weekly reading and/or writing assignments; see below

**Presentation** – each student will have one-half hour to present their topic at the end of the semester

**Final Assignment** – each student will submit a thesis proposal, consisting of thesis statement, working outline, working bibliography and a 5-page narrative overview

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

A. Preliminary to the course:
   - Students should have begun research and reading in their thesis interest area, with a general goal of reading about 500 pages in the general topic area before the first day of class.
   - Students should come to class with a working preliminary thesis statement in mind.

B. Though the course is non-credit, students are expected to spend time outside of class in preparation for course assignments and class discussion.

C. Students are expected to attend class and to comply with student academic policies (for instance, chapel attendance, intellectual honesty, and thesis process). **Three or more unexcused absences will result in a mandatory retake of the course.**

   **Note especially the discussion of Cheating and Plagiarism in the Academic Catalog and Student Handbook 2020-21, pages 116-117. See below.**

D. Students are expected to complete all weekly readings in order to foster classroom discussion. See schedule below.

E. Students are expected to complete assignments to foster classroom discussion
and to help prepare themselves for submitting the final class assignment, the thesis proposal. **Failure to complete course requirements in a timely manner may result in a mandatory retake of the course.**

F. Thesis Proposal Requirements (items are to be turned in by emailing the instructor no later than 5:00 PM on May 14th)
   2. Thesis project overview (5 pages).
   3. Working outline.

As per the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) requirements, several samples of student work may be randomly selected and used as a class artifact as part of an on-going assessment of courses and degree programs. Students’ names will be removed from any work used for this purpose.

**A note about Plagiarism from the 2020-21 Academic Catalog (pg. 116):** Plagiarism is an act of “literary theft,” in which the work of another is misrepresented as the original work of the student. This may be done intentionally or unintentionally. When excerpts, thoughts, writings, or statements of others are used in papers, essays, or other projects, they must be acknowledged in a suitable academic form.

Please note that this is a DRAFT schedule and is subject to change, based on class size and needs.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<td>Introduction to class Lewis &amp; Warfield Discussion</td>
<td>Lewis article Warfield article</td>
<td>Short description of intended project</td>
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<td>Library Tour OPAC introduction</td>
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<td>Joining the Conversation They Say/I Say, chapters 1-3</td>
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<td>Journals &amp; Databases</td>
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<td>Problem/question Purpose</td>
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<td>Contributing to the Conversation: Thesis Statements and Outlining</td>
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<td>Workshop on thesis statements Good vs. Bad sources</td>
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<td>Draft thesis statements</td>
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<td>Arguing Logically A Rulebook for Arguments</td>
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<td>Draft outline</td>
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<td>Engaging Opposition They Say/I Say, chapters 4-6</td>
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<td>Crafting Chapters</td>
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<td>Writing Readable Prose</td>
<td>Orwell article</td>
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Where do we go from here?

3-4 pg synthesis/reflection on 2 secondary source books; annotated bibliography

Project Presentations

Presentation & Handouts*

Project presentations

Presentation & Handouts*

*A note about final presentations. Please prepare for these as if you were presenting the information to the class for the first time. This is a great time to use visual aids, practice your “elevator speech,” or otherwise elaborate on introductory material (for example, talking about why the subject interests you, and when your interest began). If it is helpful, think about designing this presentation with an adult Sunday School class in mind.

COURSE CONTACT
Susanah Hanson can be contacted via email at shanson@tsm.edu or by stopping by her office in the Library.

ADDENDUM for STM STUDENTS
STM Students will complete the above assignments, and will complete two additional projects:
- Read William B. Badke’s book *Research Strategies: finding your way through the information fog*, 6th edition, and prepare materials for a half-hour teaching based on the book. Materials could include a teaching outline, a powerpoint presentation or a handout designed for class use.
- Prepare a more extensive Thesis Proposal including a 10-page overview of their thesis topic.
- In addition, STM students should complete a more extensive bibliography, incorporating the use of non-English materials.

The learning outcomes for Trinity School for Ministry are:
1. The student will recognize and identify the biblical theology evident in the course work.
2. The student will be able to articulate an Anglican understanding of biblical, historical, systematic, and pastoral theology. *Students of other traditions, especially those in the Lutheran and Presbyterian programs, should be able to articulate the theological perspective of their own tradition.*
3. The student will be able to communicate effectively the Christian message to a diversity of people in order to advance the mission of God.
4. The student will be prepared to lead effectively in a variety of Christian communities.

M.Div.: The student will be prepared to lead effectively in a variety of Christian communities.
MAR: The student will be equipped to apply scholarship to the life of the church in his or her chosen theological discipline.
STM: The student will be equipped to pursue successfully further independent research and post-graduate study in his or her chosen theological discipline.
DMin: The student will be able to identify a specific ministry problem, reflect on it biblically and theologically and apply their learning to that problem.