
Course: RT615-E&EN Research Methods
Credit: 3 Semester Hours
Semester: Fall 2025 (Session 2, Oct 20–Dec 12)
Class Time: 6:00—9:00 pm, Thursdays – CABRE 103 & Online
Professor: Dr. Michel Dodds, (816) 322-5152 ext. 1348, mike.dodds@calvary.edu
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**About This Course: This course is offered in two formats: in-person and online. Students registered for in-person attend the classes in person, online students attend the classes via the online classroom. For both in-person and online students, assignments and interaction outside of the class period are done in the learning management system.*

**About Disabilities: Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the Accommodations Support Coordinate (aso@calvary.edu) of any disabling condition that may require support.*

**About Assistance for All Course Assignments: The Clark Academic Center (learning@calvary.edu) is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for all Calvary University students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams, and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.*

**About Changes to this Syllabus: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time during the course, but any changes made will only be done after clearly communicating the need for the change and the specific change to be made via in-class announcement and Canvas announcement.*

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE:

This course overviews various research methods to study Bible and theology. Students learn how to find and use the best resources to write biblical and theological research papers following Turabian style. Students are introduced to electronic Bible study software (Logos and/or Accordance). (ILOs- 1, 2, 3)

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

A. General competencies to be achieved: You will be able to . . .

1. Demonstrate understanding of the nature and purpose of graduate research in biblical and theological studies. (PLO- 1; A- 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
2. Develop a sound methodology for graduate-level research in biblical and theological studies. (PLO- 1; A- 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

3. Interact critically with primary and secondary sources. (PLO- 1, 4; A- 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
4. Show familiarity with scholarly resources (journals, dissertations, monograph series, reference works, exegetical commentaries, etc.) in the different disciplines of biblical and theological studies. (PLO- 1; A- 4, 7, 8)

B. Specific competencies to be achieved: You will be able to . . .

1. Utilize the research resources in the Hilda Kroeker Library and other libraries. (PLO- 3; A- 3, 4)
2. Demonstrate ability with using Bible study software for doing biblical and theological research. (PLO- 3; A- 2, 4)
3. Demonstrate graduate level academic writing skills. (PLO- 3; A- 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
4. Compose a thesis syllabus according to the proper CU guidelines. (PLO- 3; A- 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
5. Demonstrate basic knowledge of biblical Greek and Hebrew in order to do scholarly research in Bible and Theology. (PLO- 1; A- 2, 4, 7, 8)

III. MATERIALS

A. Required Textbooks:

1. The Bible: NASBU, ESV, or NET.

-The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB, English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

2. Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Ninth edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018. ISBN: 978-0226430577. Cost: \$18.00. 464 pages.

B. Bible Search Software: Students must obtain access to software programs for doing searches in the biblical languages. The following Bible Study Software programs are highly recommended but are not required for this course, however, other courses at CU may require use of these programs.

1. Logos 9 Academic Essentials (\$499)
2. Accordance 13 Academic Bundle Green Level (\$400)

IV. REQUIREMENTS

***Note:** Further specific assignment instructions are provided in Canvas in the specific assignment link.

Assignment #1: Turabian Formatting and Writing Style Practice. Each class session will include practice exercises of proper Turabian formatting and Writing style for graduate academic work.

Assignment #2: Bible Languages and Bible Study Software Practice. Each class session will include practice exercises in the biblical languages and Bible study software.

Assignment #3: Research Topic. Choose and submit a graduate-level research topic of interest in biblical/theological studies.

Assignment #4: Initial Bibliography. The initial bibliography should focus on primary sources, peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, academic monographs, and *exegetical* commentaries. Designate at least one item that will be borrowed via an inter-library loan from another library.

Assignment #5: Argument Outline. Submit a simple outline of the flow of your argument with the evidence that must be presented with each major point of the argument to prove your thesis.

Assignment #6: Table of Contents & Abstract. Present tentative (i.e. drafts) Turabian style Contents and Abstract pages for your research essay.

Assignment #7: Completed Research Essay. This essay must be formatted with all of the paper elements as described in class and 30–35 pages in Turabian formatting for Research Papers.

Assignment #8: Presentation of Research. Make a 15-minute presentation (followed by class discussion) of your research essay. You are responsible for scheduling your presentations with the instructor if not able to present in class to peers.

IV. METHODS

A. Presentation:

- 1. In-class methods:** listening to lectures, participating in class discussions, language and research practice, and making presentations.

***About Class Attendance:** Research consistently demonstrates that class attendance and active participation correlate to higher performance on course assessments.

***About Classroom Use of Media:**

- Computing devices** are permitted during the lecture and class discussion sessions for the sole purpose of taking notes. Use of these devices to access the Internet, make telephone calls or video calls, text messaging, updating social network services, etc. is not allowed, let alone ia very distracting to other students.
- Cellphones / smartphones** may only be used in an emergency, and in those situations the student may take the call but must leave the room and not return until the next break out of courtesy to fellow classmates.

***About Note Taking:** Students are expected to take notes during each class. Peer reviewed studies continue to demonstrate that notes taken by hand are understood better and remembered longer than those taken with a computer.

2. Out-of-class methods: research and writing.

***About written assignments:** Unless directed otherwise, all written assignments must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition and the Calvary Style Guide, 2019 update.

B. Grading:

***About Late Assignments:** All course assignments must be submitted into Canvas by the due date listed in the Class Schedule and Canvas. Late assignments will be accepted but will be reduced 5% each week they are late.

***About Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person's or AI entity's ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Most assignments at Calvary require the student to produce original work. Therefore, unless specifically permitted by the instructor, the use of AI-generated content is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. AI, however, may be utilized in cases where the instructor has explicitly permitted its use to accomplish specific tasks. It is only in these cases that AI-generated (or modified) content may be submitted by the student. If there are any questions as to the permissibility of AI use for an assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification.

***About course grade:** See the grading scale in the University Catalog for the specific grading scale that will be used for final course grade.

1. Possible points for each specific assignment:

***Note:** An assignment-specific rubric will be provided for each assignment.

#1 – Formatting Practice (5 x 25 points).	= 125 points
#2 – Language & Software Practice (5 x 25 points).	= 125 "
#3 – Research Topic..	= 25 "
#4 – Initial Bibliography.	= 100 "
#5 – Argument Outline.	= 100 "
#6 – TOC & Abstract.	= 100 "
#7 – Complete Essay.	= 400 "
#8 – Presentation of Research.	= 25 "
TOTAL POINTS.	= 1000 "

VI. ABBREVIATED CLASS SCHEDULE

[**Note:** An expanded schedule will be presented during the first class session.]

Week	Reading	Topics	Assignments Due
#1	> Turabian: Ch 1–2; 15–16; 20	Definition and Planning of Research; Alphabets	--
#2	> Turabian: Ch 3–4; 17.1–4; 21 >CU Style Guide	Resources for Biblical Studies Research; Words	Research Topic; Formatting #1; Software/Language #1
#3	> Turabian: Ch 5–6; 17.5–9; 22–23	Constructing an Argument; Reading words	Formatting #2; Software/Language #2
#4	> Turabian: Ch 7–8; 17.10–11; 24	Drafting, Presenting Evidence; Verbs	Initial Bibliography; Formatting #3; Software/Language #3
#5	> Turabian: Ch 9–10; 25	Revising Draft, Introduction and Conclusion; Word Studies	Argument Outline; Formatting #4; Software/Language #4
#6	[No Class]	[Thanksgiving]	--
#7	> Turabian: Ch 11–12; 26	Revising Sentences, Ethics of Research; Reading Sentences	TOC & Abstract [Drafts]; Formatting #5; Software/Language #5
#8	> Turabian: Ch 13 & 14	Presenting Research	Completed Essay; Presentation of Research