

**United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities**  
**IS100 Principles of Writing in Theological Interpretation**  
**Fall 2010      Mondays 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

Pamela S. Wynn, Instructor  
(651) 633-4311 Ext. 209 (w)  
(651) 636-1188 (h)  
E-mail: [pwynn@unitedseminary.edu](mailto:pwynn@unitedseminary.edu)

Office Hours: Mondays 4:00-5:00 p.m.  
or by appointment

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to the guiding principles and processes of expository writing in academics. The focus of this course is to develop skills in generating ideas, organizing and developing thoughts, revising, and handling the mechanics of writing. The main emphasis is on how various expository methods of organizing essays help writers to clearly present both informational and abstract ideas in theological interpretation.

**Course Objectives:**

- To learn the principles of expository writing and expectations for an academic paper
- To become familiar with manuals of style and develop ability to use appropriately
- To know the principles and techniques of a variety of writing strategies
- To develop a beginning knowledge of critical thinking skills

**Course Requirements:**

- 1) Regular class attendance
- 2) Read required course materials
- 3) Active participation in class
- 4) Complete writing assignments as described in course syllabus
- 5) Meet with instructor to discuss and refine topic for final paper

**Guidelines for Writing a Paper in IS100:**

- *The format for papers must be **12 point type, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.***
- *First paragraph must include an **underlined** thesis.*
- *Papers are assigned a word limit. Papers should not exceed the assigned length.*
- *Papers must **provide appropriate citations** as outlined in Turabian.*
- *Papers must be original work by the student.*
- *Papers are expected to be turned in when due unless arranged with the instructor **prior to due date.***
- *Papers **will not be accepted via e-mail.** A hard copy must be submitted.*
- *Papers should include student's box number.*

**Required Texts**

*A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Kate L. Turabian  
*The St. Martin's Handbook*, Seventh Edition, Andrea Lunsford  
*How to Think Theologically*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Howard W. Stone and James O. Duke

## Recommended Texts

*Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*, Lecretia B. Yaghjian

*The Punctuation Handbook*, Joan I. Miller and Bruce J. Taylor

## Readings on Reserve

in *Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*, Yaghjian  
in *Engaging the Bible in a Gendered World*, ed. Carolyn Pressler and Linda Day

## For further study:

*The Craft of Research*, Wayne C. Booth, et al.

*Axelrod & Cooper's Concise Guide to Writing*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Rise Axelrod & Charles R. Cooper

*Reading Critically, Writing Well: A Reader and Guide*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed., Rise B. Axelrod, et al.

*Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing*, Mignon Fogarty

*Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, Lynne Truss

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## Outline of Class Sessions

### Week One, Sept. 13: Introduction—Overview of course and syllabus;

#### Writing Rubric

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** in *St. Martin's*: "The Art and Craft of Writing" (14-53), thesis statements (221; 289-290), "Academic integrity and plagiarism" (283-285).

**Read** in *A Manual for Writing*: "Guard against Inadvertent Plagiarism" (4.2.3; 7.9-7.10), "Quoting Accurately and Avoiding Plagiarism" (25.1).

**Read** "What are the Requirements for Documenting Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism in a Theological Research Essay?" (129-144) in *Writing Theology Well* (on reserve).

**Read** the Introduction (1-10) in *How to Think Theologically*.

**Writing assessment:** *see handout*.

**Write** a theological reflection in response to the following statement: "To be Christian at all is to be a theologian. There are no exceptions" (250 words). *See handout*.

### Week Two, Sept. 20: Basics of writing an academic paper; Writing a theological reflection

**Writing assessment AND theological reflection due**

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** in *St. Martin's*: Summaries (265-267; 276-277).

**Read** in *A Manual for Writing*: Preface (xiii-xv), "General Introduction to Citation Practices" (15.1-15.6), Summaries (4.2.2-4.2.3; 7.4), Notes (16.3-16.4.3).

**Read** "Writing Theological Reflection Well: Rhetorics of Process, Problem Solving, and Proclamation" (18-35) in *Writing Theology Well* (on reserve).

**Read** "Image and Imagination: Why Inclusive Language Matters," Christie Neuger (153-165) and "What I Have Learned from My Sisters," Patrick Miller (238-252), in *Engaging the Bible in a Gendered World* (on reserve).

**Write** a theological reflection in response to "Image and Imagination: Why Inclusive Language Matters" and "What I Have Learned from My Sisters" (250 words). *See handout*.

### **Week Three, Sept. 27: Documenting sources in theological inquiry; Writing a summary**

#### ***Theological reflection due***

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** in *St. Martin's*: “Exploring, Planning, and Drafting” (54-80), “Developing Paragraphs” (110-138), transitions (125-133; 657-658; 664; 696-97; 719), antecedents (572; 628-636).

**Read** in *A Manual for Writing*: “Planning a first draft” – “Drafting your report” (6.1-7.11).

**Read** Chapter 1 (11-25) in *How to Think Theologically*.

**Write** a summary of Chapter 1 in *How to Think Theologically* (500 words). *See* *handout*.

### **Week Four, Oct. 4: Exploring a topic; First drafts**

#### ***Summary due***

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** in *St. Martin's*: sentence fragments (663-67), “Analyzing Arguments” (147-154), Evaluating sources (252-259).

**Read** “Writing the Theological Book Review Well” (68-71) in *Writing Theology Well* (on reserve).

**Read** *How to Think Theologically*.

### **Week Five, Oct. 11: Critical thinking in theological inquiry; Writing a book review**

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** in *St. Martin's*: “Fallacies” (155-163), types of sources (222-25).

**Read** in *A Manual for Writing*: Bibliographies and Reference Lists (15.3-15.3.2; 16.2-16.2.3; 18.1-18.3.3; pages 401-02).

**Write** a book review of *How to Think Theologically* (750 words). *See* *handout*.

### **Week Six, Oct. 18: Logical fallacies; Bibliographies and Reference Lists**

#### ***Book review due***

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** in *St. Martin's*: types of sources (222-25), quotations (270-75; 740-46), comparison and contrast (67; 120-121).

**Read** in *A Manual for Writing*: quotations (25.1-25.3.2), “Order your reasons” (6.2.5).

### **Reading Week, Oct. 25-29**

### **Week Seven, Nov. 1: Writing a critical essay in theological inquiry**

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** in *A Manual for Writing*: “Revising your draft” (9.1- 9.4).

**Write** a critical essay comparing and contrasting the concepts of embedded and deliberative theology and the role that each plays in the development of one’s faith drawing upon the ideas of Stone and Duke (13-25) in *How to Think Theologically* (750 words). **Use footnotes for citation purposes.** *See* *handout*.

**Week Eight, Nov. 8: Revision and rewriting**

**Comparison and Contrast paper due**

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** “Rewriting Theology Well: A Rhetoric of Revision” (288-301) in *Writing Theology Well* (on reserve).

**Read** in *St. Martin’s*: “Organizing verbal and visual information” (64-69; 116-123), restrictive and non-restrictive elements (713-16; 723-26).

**Week Nine, Nov. 15: Organizational strategies**

Assignment **due Week Thirteen:** Write a 5-6 page paper (1250-1500 words) from a faith based stance on **one** of the following topics: the Iraq war, **OR** GLBT marriage and the Christian church, **OR** health care in the United States. **(Must cite at least 5 different types of sources as detailed in handout.) Use endnotes for citation purposes. See handout.**

**Week Ten, Nov. 22: More on organizational strategies**

Assignments **due next class:**

**Read** in *St. Martin’s*: “Oral and Multimedia Presentations” (483-501).

**Read** “Writing with Theological Imagination Well” (201-232) in *Writing Theology Well* (on reserve).

**Week Eleven, Nov. 29: From the page to an oral presentation**

Assignments **due next class:**

**Prepare** for oral presentations. *See handout.*

**Week Twelve, Dec. 6: Translations and theological texts; Oral presentations**

Assignment **due next class:**

*Final Paper due next week*

**Week Thirteen, Dec.13: Writing genres and theological texts; Oral presentations**

*Final Paper due*

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**Policy on Attendance in IS100**

Students are expected to attend punctually all scheduled class meetings. Absences should normally occur only for urgent reasons as ill health or critical emergency. Occasionally absences may occur due to a conflict with a student’s other commitments; instructor should be notified in advance. Depending on the nature of the course a student may or may not be able to negotiate with the instructor to make up missed work. However, excessive absences or tardiness, even for legitimate reasons, may jeopardize a student’s course grade or course completion. In IS100, absence from three or more sessions will jeopardize the student’s ability to successfully complete the course.

**Policy on Auditing IS100**

Auditors are students for which regular attendance and other forms of participation are expected. These students are required to complete the writing assignments as agreed

upon by student and instructor. Performance in the course is not evaluated. Papers will receive feedback but will not be graded. A student who audits this course receives neither credit nor grade for the course.

### **UTS Policy on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined as follows: “Plagiarism is the dishonest act presenting the words or thoughts of another writer [or person] as if they were your own ... If you quote from anything at all ... you must put quotation marks around it, or set it off from your text. If you summarize or paraphrase an author’s words, you must clearly indicate where the summary or paraphrase begins and ends. In every instance you must formally acknowledge the written source form which you took the material.” [From James A. W. Hefferman and John E. Lincoln, *Writing: A College Handbook* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), p. 457]

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Ignorance concerning the proper citation of sources does not exempt the student from the consequences of plagiarism. If plagiarism is detected, consequences may include an “F” or “NC” for the assignment or exam in question, or an “F” or “NC” for the course. Repeated offenses may be grounds for dismissal from the student’s program.

### **UTS Policy on Inclusive Language**

Exclusive language is any form of communication which demeans, discounts, or ignores the experiences and full humanity of people on the basis of gender, race, ethnic group, class, age, sexual orientation, or differing abilities and hence fosters oppression and injustice. Language shapes relationships between persons and shapes the self-image of persons. UTS seeks to affirm the human community in all its diversity. In a tradition of seeking justice as an educational community and while embracing diversity of faith traditions, UTS strongly encourages all of its members to use language in writing and speech that is inclusive in regard to gender, race, ethnic group, class, age, sexual orientation, or differing abilities.

### **UTS Policy on Extensions**

The work for a course is terminated at the end of the final class session. The performance in the course is evaluated on the basis of the work submitted by that time, unless an exception is made by the instructor, in which case an extension must be agreed to by the instructor by the end of the final class session and the student must complete a formal petition for extension to be submitted in lieu of a grade. If the student is unable to negotiate the extension by the end of the final class session due to critical health issues, the student is responsible for seeing that the instructor is notified as soon as possible and then negotiating the extension promptly. Extensions (of course work) beyond the end of the semester will be approved only under extraordinary circumstances. Late papers and makeup exams will be accepted **only with the permission of the instructor and only in cases of emergency.**

In the event such an exception is agreed to, the student shall complete the petition for extension form and the instructor shall file the extension form with the registrar by the date grades are due. The Student Review Committee shall monitor extensions. If no

petition for extension is filed, a final grade will be submitted. An extension may be granted for a period not to exceed six months from the end of the term. If the work is not completed by the date petitioned, a final grade will be submitted. Any renewal of an extension must be approved by the instructor and filed with the registrar prior to the due date on the original petition. No extension or its renewal will exceed six months from the end of the term in question.

### **UTS Policy on Sexual Harassment**

United Seminary is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which students, faculty and staff can work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of sexual harassment, including sexual exploitation or intimidation. The Seminary will not tolerate sexual harassment and such behavior is prohibited both by law and by Seminary policy. For the full policy on Sexual harassment, please see the “Policy on Sexual Harassment” in the *Masters Student Handbook*.