

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.

COURSE SYLLABUS

RTCH 500

RESEARCH, WRITING, AND MINISTRY PREPARATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the skills necessary for competent graduate work. These skills include theological and professional library competency, the use of electronic research media, the execution of research design, and graduate writing development. The course also prepares students for ministry success by equipping them for family and education balance, avoiding burnout, and pursuing intentional spiritual formation.

RATIONALE

The student entering a graduate program is not automatically equipped to perform work at the graduate level. Preparation and skill development in theological research and writing are necessary to ensure subsequent academic success. A great ministry education cannot be built upon scholarship alone, but it also cannot be built without scholarship. Pursuing excellence in ministry practice and scholarship will qualify the student to pursue the high-caliber accomplishments worthy of a Liberty University School of Divinity degree.

I. PREREQUISITE

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Microsoft Word

IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Recognize basic research design relevant to graduate studies and professional practice.
- B. Design a plan for integrating one's spouse and family into his or her educational and spiritual growth during ministry.

- C. Demonstrate requisite knowledge as it relates to the field of graduate research, writing, and ministry preparation.
- D. Evaluate resources to ensure they are appropriate for a selected research topic.
- E. Construct a research paper that can meet the requirements of an academic or professional research paper in the future.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations
- B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

- C. Discussion Board Forums (3)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student will create a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be at least 400 words and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the student will reply to the threads of at least 2 classmates. Each reply must be at least 250 words. (MLO: A, C)

- D. Exegesis Research Paper

The student will write a research paper that will be divided into 3 parts. Each part will begin the process of helping the student gain experience with submitting a research paper through the following stages:

Part 1: Introduction/Thesis/Bibliography

The student will be given 3 biblical passages on which he or she can write the paper. Following the Kaiser and Silva outline, the student will segment the paper into the context, meaning, and significance of the passage. The student will write an introductory paragraph that will include a thesis statement. Along with the introduction and thesis, the student will list 10 sources relevant to the paper which will be properly cited in current Turabian format as interpreted by the School of Divinity Writing Guide found [here](#). The sources must be current and scholarly. (MLO: C, D)

Part 2: Rough Draft/Point One

The student will re-write the introduction as needed, taking into consideration any feedback provided. In addition, the student will write the paragraphs that cover Point One of the paper. Point One must consist of the *context* of the chosen passage. Formatting and argumentation will be crucial in this section of the paper. (MLO: D)

Part 3: Final Draft

The student will submit a 2,400–3,000-word final draft of the paper. The student must incorporate feedback from the previously submitted components, and the paper must include the following sections: Introduction, Context,

Meaning, Significance, and Conclusion. Perfection in the implementation of current Turabian format will be mandatory. (MLO: D, E)

E. Ministry Journals (4)

The student will compose journals that are reflective assignments devised to equip him or her to think about the application of what is being learned for future ministry context. Each journal will have a prompt that the student must respond to. There is no word count requirement, but the prompt must be answered thoroughly. (MLO: A, C)

F. Ministry Preparation Project

The student will devise a plan for incorporating his or her spouse/family/ministry into the education and ministry preparation throughout his or her educational/ministerial endeavors. If the student is married, this assignment must be created in conjuncture with his or her spouse. If the student is not married, this assignment must be created in conjuncture with a family member, mentor, or friend. (MLO: B)

G. Core Competency Pre-Test

In Module/Week 1, the student will take a core competency pre-test. This pre-test is assigned points based on completion. Answers will be graded, but the student will not be penalized for wrong answers. The pre-test will contain 100 multiple-choice and true/false questions and have a time limit of 2 hours.

H. Turabian and Reading Quizzes (4)

Each quiz will cover the Turabian reading material for the module/week in which it is assigned, as well as the preceding module/week, if applicable. Each quiz will be open-book/open-notes, contain 30 multiple-choice and true/false questions, and have a time limit of 1 hour. Each quiz can be taken up to 2 times. (MLO: B)

VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Discussion Board Forums (3 at 75 pts ea)	225
Exegesis Research Paper	
Part 1	60
Part 2	100
Part 3	150
Ministry Journals (4 at 25 pts ea)	100
Ministry Preparation Project	100
Core Competency Pre-Test	25
Turabian and Reading Quizzes (4 at 60 pts ea)	240
Total	1010

B. Scale

A = 940–1010 A- = 920–939 B+ = 900–919 B = 860–899 B- = 840–859

C+ = 820–839 C = 780–819 C- = 760–779 D+ = 740–759 D = 700–739
D- = 680–699 F = 0–679

C. Style Guidelines

All assignments for this course are to be formatted in accordance with the [LUSD Writing Guide](#) and the latest edition of the Turabian style manual (*A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*). Discussion assignments and essay examinations may use the parenthetical citation style. All other written assignments should use the footnote citation style. Supplemental writing aids are available via the [Online Writing Center](#).

D. Extra Credit

No additional “for credit” assignments will be permitted beyond those given in the course requirements stated above.

E. Course Changes

Course requirements are subject to change by the administration of the University at any time with appropriate notice.

F. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online’s Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.

COURSE SCHEDULE

RTCH 500

Textbooks: Edman, *They Found the Secret* (1984).
 Falwell, *Building Dynamic Faith* (2005).
 Kaiser & Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics* (2007).
 Kopic, *A Little Book for New Theologians* (2012).
 Mathis & Parnell, *How to Stay Christian in Seminary* (2014).
 Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Current).
 Vyhmeister & Robertson, *Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology* (2014).
 Weston, *A Rulebook for Arguments* (2009).

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
1	Kaiser & Silva: Introduction, ch. 1 Kopic: chs. 1–10 Turabian: chs. 1, 14, Appendix 1 Vyhmeister & Robertson: chs. 1, 11, 16, 21 4 presentations 1 website	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1 Core Competency Pre-Test Turabian and Reading Quiz 1	10 0 75 25 60
2	Edman: chs. 1–5 Kaiser & Silva: chs. 2–3 Turabian: chs. 2–3, 15–17 Vyhmeister & Robertson: chs. 12–15 4 presentations 1 article 1 website	Exegesis Research Paper – Part 1 Ministry Journal 1	60 25
3	Edman: chs. 6–10 Kaiser & Silva: chs. 4–6 Turabian: chs. 4–5 Vyhmeister & Robertson: chs. 18–19, 22 Weston: Preface, Introduction, chs. 1–5, Appendix I 3 presentations	DB Forum 2 Turabian and Reading Quiz 2	75 60
4	Edman: chs. 11–15 Falwell: days 1–6 Kaiser & Silva: ch. 7 Turabian: chs. 6–7, 25 Vyhmeister & Robertson: ch. 17 Weston: chs. 6–9, Appendix II 3 presentations	Ministry Journal 2	25

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
5	Edman: chs. 16–20 Falwell: days 7–12 Kaiser & Silva: chs. 8, 10–11 Turabian: chs. 9, 12, 20 4 presentations	Exegesis Research Paper – Part 2 Turabian and Reading Quiz 3	100 60
6	Falwell: days 13–18 Kaiser & Silva: chs. 13–15 Turabian: chs. 10–11, 21 Vyhmeister & Robertson: ch. 2 Weston: Review ch. 9, Appendices I–II 3 presentations	DB Forum 3 Ministry Journal 3	75 25
7	Falwell: days 19–24 Turabian: chs. 22–24 Vyhmeister & Robertson: ch. 4 4 presentations	Exegesis Research Paper – Part 3 Turabian and Reading Quiz 4	150 60
8	Falwell: days 25–31 Mathis & Parnell: Entire Book 4 presentations	Ministry Preparation Project Ministry Journal 4	100 25
TOTAL			1010

DB = Discussion Board

NOTE: Each course module/week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.