



RDOC9300 Introduction to Doctoral Research and Writing

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

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Mission: New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

In this course students will be introduced to the literature and techniques of doctoral research. Special attention will be given to the development of research proposals and the presentation of research, including individual guidance in the form and style of research writing. The course must be taken during the student's first year in the program.

Student Learning Outcomes

The student involved in this course should be able to accomplish the following:

Cognitive

- Be familiar with texts that address the research process
- Identify the various components of a research paper (dissertation)
- Identify resources in each specific discipline that will inform the dissertation of the student
- Be familiar with research tools, library and electronic, that facilitate research

Affective

- Understand the importance of selected resources as they relate to the wider field
- Associate titles with significant authors in the specific discipline
- Understand the importance of presenting credible research for the academic community
- Grasp the importance of extending ministry through sound research

Psychomotor

- Become conversant in "annotated bibliography" format with the resources
- Prepare and critique a research paper
- Demonstrate competence in the use of research tools

Required Readings

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William T. Fitzgerald. *The Craft of Research*. 4th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Leedy, Paul D., and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, with Laura Ruth Johnson. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. 12th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2019.

Optional Readings

Cone, John D., and Sharon L. Foster, *Dissertations and Theses from Start to Finish*. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2006.

Pyrczak, Fred, and Randall R. Bruce. *Writing Empirical Research Reports*. 8th ed. New York: Routledge, 2017.

Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean, and Terry Dwayne Robertson. *Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology*. 4th Ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020.

Yount, William (Rick). *Research Design & Statistical Analysis in Christian Ministry*. The book is available in the Course Documents section of the Blackboard shell.

Style Guides (latest editions)

Biblical studies students:

The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies

Counseling students:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association

All other students:

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*,

Course Teaching Methodology

The course seminar is divided into three components: an introduction to doctoral research, an introduction to research methodologies, and a writing workshop. In addition to attending the seminar, students will follow the course schedule below.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Course Requirements

Each student is expected to study the required texts carefully, complete pre-course assignments, and attend all class sessions. Assignments are to be completed prior to the class session.

In order to maximize the time in the course, it is crucial that you do extensive work prior to the meeting dates. Assessment of the reading assignments will be made the first day of class. Failure to complete the appropriate reading and pre-assignments is grounds for dismissal from the class. Below is a guide to help you complete your assignments.

Begin reading texts as soon as you can.

June 21-25

Students will go on Blackboard and respond to a threaded discussion (see Discussion Board, "Syllabus Questions") and ask any questions regarding the syllabus, requirements,

or time line. If no questions, simply reply that you understand the syllabus and are looking forward to seeing Drs. Riley and Rivers in July.

June 28-July 2

Complete reading *The Craft of Research*.

Complete reading *Practical Research: Planning and Design*.

July 5-9

- Study the appropriate style guide for your major.
- Watch the **Race before Us** videos on the seminary [YouTube site](#). Go to the Race before Us discussion board on Blackboard and blog about ideas these students shared that you would use to encourage new students.

July 12-16

- Optional: read *Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology*, 2nd ed. (good general introduction to writing research papers).
- Optional: read *Research Design & Statistical Analysis in Christian Ministry*, 5th ed., by William “Rick” Yount (helpful for quantitative research). The book is available in the Course Documents section of the Blackboard shell.
- Optional: read *Writing Empirical Research Reports*.
- Optional: read *Dissertations and Theses from Start to Finish* (helpful for counseling students).
- Find one article from each of three different respected journals in your field and analyze the structure of each article in light of your readings. Observe how each author handles the elements of research and how arguments are made and supported. If you have access to papers presented at scholarly meetings in your field, you may include one paper among the three articles. **Bring a copy of each article to class on Tuesday, July 27.**

July 19-23

Telephone interview

Conduct a telephone interview with one person who has a doctoral degree in your particular field from one of the following categories: a professor at a college or seminary, a denominational worker, or a pastor or staff member at a large church. Discuss the value and opportunities of doctoral work in relationship to both local church work and higher education in general and the person’s vocation specifically. Discuss challenges and limitations of holding a doctoral degree in both the job and ministry contexts. Discuss suggestions the person has for students to strengthen their doctoral work and make it more marketable. The interview should be summarized in a two-page, single-spaced submission. ***Submit the interview through Blackboard by July 24.***

July 26

Download the Writing Exercise from Blackboard. Edit it for form, style, and grammar; and **print a copy of your edited version to bring with you to class on Thursday, July 29.** We will begin the session with discussion of this exercise, which we will collect following the discussion.

Grading: This course is pass-fail.

Class Schedule for Introduction to Research and Writing
(subject to change)

Tuesday, July 27 8:30 – 11:45 a.m.	Program Orientation Library Orientation	Dr. Riley Eric Benoy
11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch	
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	The Research Problem and	Dr. Rivers
3:00 – 3:30 p.m.	Break	
3:30 – 6:30 p.m.	Writing the Literature Review Book Reviews – Critical Reviews	Dr. Riley
Wednesday, July 28 8:30 – 11:45 a.m.	Introduction to Research Methodologies (How to Do the Research) Qualitative vs. Quantitative Approaches Research Ethics Discussion of Journal Articles	Dr. Rivers (also Dr. Riley for research methodologies)
11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch	
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Writing/Logical Development Writing Seminar Papers/Writing for	Dr. Riley
3:00 – 3:30 p.m.	Break	
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.	Writing a CV Becoming a Professional (joining professional societies, grading, adjunct teaching, developing relationships)	Dr. Rivers
Thursday, July 29 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Writing Workshop	Pam Cole

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Additional Suggested Resources

Form and Style

Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed.

Strunk, W., and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. Penguin, 2005.

General

Barzun, J. *The Modern Researcher*. 6th ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2004.

Mauch, James E., and Jack W. Birch. *Guide to the Successful Thesis and Dissertation*. 5th ed., rev. and exp. New York: M. Dekker, 2003.

Preece, Roy. *Starting Research: An Introduction to Academic Research and Dissertation Writing*. New York: Pinter, 1994.

Sternberg, David. *How to Complete and Survive a Doctoral Dissertation*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1981.

Qualitative Research—General

Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007. [This is a helpful introduction to qualitative research design.]

Kvale, Steinar. *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996.

Qualitative Research Design—Biography

Denzin, N. K. *Interpretive Biography*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989.

Lomask, M. *The Biographer's Craft*. New York: Harper and Row, 1986.

Plummer, K. *Documents of Life: An Introduction to the Problems and Literature of a Humanistic Method*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983.

Plummer, K. *Documents of Life 2: An Invitation to a Critical Humanism*. London: Sage, 2001.

Qualitative Research Design—Phenomenology

Giorgi, A., ed. *Phenomenology and Psychological Research*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985.

Moustakas, C. *Phenomenological Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.
Polkinghorne, D. E. "Phenomenological Research Methods." In R. S. Valle and S. Halling, eds., *Existential-Phenomenological Perspectives in Psychology*. New York: Plenum, 1989.

Qualitative Research Design—Grounded Theory

Chenitz, W. C., and J. M. Swanson. *From Practice to Grounded Theory: Qualitative Research in Nursing*. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley, 1986.
Strauss, A., and J. Corbin. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998.

Qualitative Research Design—Ethnography

Denzin, Norman K. *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997.
Fetterman, D. M. *Ethnography: Step by Step*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1998.
Hammersley, M., and P. Atkinson. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 1995.
Wolcott, H. F. *Transforming Qualitative Data: Description, Analysis, and Interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.

Qualitative Research Design—Case Study

Merriam, S. *Case Study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988.
Stake, R. *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995.

Quantitative Research Design

Ary, Donald, Lucy Cheser Jacobs, and Asghar Razavieh. *Introduction to Research in Education*. 7th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2005.
Borg, Walter R. *Applying Educational Research*. 3d ed. New York: Longman, 1993.
Kerlinger, Fred N. *Foundations of Behavioral Research*. 3d ed. Ft. Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1992 (or Kerlinger and Howard B. Lee, 4th ed. 2000). [This is the classical treatise on quantitative research design.]
Posavac, Emil J., and Raymond G. Carey. *Program Evaluation: Methods and Case Studies*. 7th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2007).
Weiss, Carol H. *Evaluation Research: Methods of Assessing Effectiveness*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1972.

Questionnaire Design

Oppenheim, A. N. *Questionnaire Design and Attitude Measurement*. New York: Pinter, 1992.
Sudman, Seymour, and Norman M. Bradburn. *Asking Questions: The Definitive Guide to Questionnaire Design*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.

Dissertation Prospectus – Sample Outline #1 (Appropriate for some using historical research)

(Note: This outline contains the primary items to be in the prospectus. Each student should customize as appropriate to his or her dissertation.)

- I. The Thesis and Its Setting
 - A. The thesis (research question, thesis statement, purpose)
 - B. The hypotheses
 - C. The definitions of terms [if needed]
 - D. The assumptions [if needed]
- II. The Review of the Related Literature or State of Research
- III. The Importance of the Study
- IV. Methodology

[Customize this section for your dissertation—cover the material, but do not be bound to the outline.]

Write an introduction to the entire section. Then write a narrative section that addresses the issues appropriate to the proposal.

Section 1: use a descriptive subheading that fits your research. In a narrative format cover the appropriate items such as

- The data needed [*primary and secondary – be specific*]
- Criteria governing the admissibility of the data.
- The location of the data [*specific ... ie. Not “in books in the library”*]
- The means of obtaining the data.
- The treatment of the data [*This is the heart of the section. Discuss the methodology used and how you will interpret the data. Be specific and “detailed.”*]

Section 2:

- The Qualifications of the Researcher
- The Outline of the Proposed Dissertation (organized by chapters)
- Selected Bibliography

Adapted from Paul D. Leedy, *Practical Research: Planning and Design*

Dissertation Prospectus - Sample Outline #2
(Appropriate especially for some quantitative designs)

(Note: This outline contains the primary items to be in the prospectus. Each student should customize as appropriate to his or her dissertation.)

- I. The Problem and Its Setting
 - A. The statement of the problem
 - B. The hypotheses
 - C. The definitions of terms
- II. The Review of the Related Literature
- III. The Importance of the Study
- IV. Method
 - A. Subjects
 - B. Measures
 - 1. Validation
 - 2. Reliability
 - C. Procedure
 - D. Data analysis
- V. The Qualifications of the Researcher
- VI. The Outline of the Proposed Study (organized by chapters)
- VII. Selected Bibliography

Dissertation Prospectus - Sample Outline #3
(Appropriate especially for some quantitative designs)

(Note: This outline contains the primary items to be in the prospectus. Each student should customize as appropriate to his or her dissertation.)

- I. Introduction and Literature Review
 - A. Literature Section 1
 - B. Literature Section 2
 - C. Summary and conclusions
 - D. Statement of purpose
- II. Method
 - A. Subjects
 - 1. Criteria of inclusion in study
 - 2. Recruitment of subjects
 - B. Design
 - C. Setting and apparatus
 - D. Independent variables
 - E. Measures (dependent variables)
 - F. Procedure
- III. Results
 - A. Statistical procedures
 - B. Data presentation
 - C. Interpretation of the data
- IV. The Qualifications of the Researcher
- V. The Outline of the Proposed Dissertation (organized by chapters)
- VI. Appendixes
- VII. Selected Bibliography

Adapted from John D. Cone and Sharon L. Foster, *Dissertations and Theses from Start to Finish*, 83-90. See chart on pp. 132-33.

Dissertation Prospectus - Sample Outline #4
(Appropriate especially for some qualitative research designs)

(Note: This outline contains the primary items to be in the prospectus. Each student should customize as appropriate to his or her dissertation.)

- I. Introduction
 - A. Problem and significance (in related literature)
 - B. Focus and research questions
 - C. Limitations of the study
- II. Research Design
 - A. Overall strategy and rationale
 - B. Focusing on the specific settings, population and phenomenon
 - C. Sampling people, behaviors, events, and/or processes
 - D. Issues of entry, reciprocity, personal biography, and ethics
- III. Data Collection Methods
 - A. Participation in the setting
 - B. Direct observations
 - C. In-depth interviewing
 - D. Document review
- IV. Recording, Managing, and Analyzing Data Resources for the Study
 - A. Time line
 - B. Level of data collection
 - C. Personnel needed
 - D. Resources needed
- V. The Value and Logic of Qualitative Research (Criteria of soundness)
- VI. The Qualifications of the Researcher
- VII. The Outline of the Proposed Dissertation (organized by chapters)
- VIII. Appendixes
- IX. Selected Bibliography

Adapted from Marshall and Rossman as cited in John W., Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 22.

Dissertation Prospectus - Sample Outline #5
(Appropriate especially for some qualitative research designs)

(Note: This outline contains the primary items to be in the prospectus. Each student should customize as appropriate to his or her dissertation.)

- I. Introduction
 - A. Statement of the problem
 - B. Purpose of the study
 - C. The grand tour of question and subquestions
 - D. Definitions
 - E. Delimitations and limitations
 - F. Significance of the study
- II. Procedure
 - A. Assumptions and rationale for a qualitative design
 - B. The type of design used
 - C. The role of the researcher
 - D. Data collection procedures
 - E. Methods of verification
 - F. Outcome of the study and its relation to theory and literature
- III. The Qualifications of the Researcher
- IV. The Outline of the Proposed Dissertation (organized by chapters)
- V. Appendixes
- VI. Selected bibliography

Adapted from John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 23.

Dissertation Prospectus - Sample Outline #6
(Appropriate especially for some quantitative research designs)

(Note: This outline contains the primary items to be in the prospectus. Each student should customize as appropriate to his or her dissertation.)

- I. Introduction
 - A. Statement of the problem
 - B. Review of the literature
 - C. Questions and/or hypotheses
- II. Methodology
 - A. Subjects
 - B. Instruments
 - C. Procedures
- III. Analysis of data
 - A. Data organization
 - B. Statistical procedures
- IV. Significance of the study
 - A. Implications
 - B. Applications
- V. Time schedule
- VI. Qualifications of the researcher
- VII. Outline of the proposed dissertation
- VIII. Selected bibliography

Adapted from Donald Ary, Lucy Cheser Jacobs, and Asghar Razavieh, *Introduction to Research in Education* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1996), 500.