



ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

**RDOC9303 Prospectus Development**  
**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**June 7-11, 2021**

**Dr. Loretta Rivers**

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies  
Professor of Social Work  
Office: Dodd 201  
Phone: 504.282.4455 ext. 3211  
E-mail: lrivers@nobts.edu

**Dr. Charlie Ray**

Distinguished Professor of New  
Testament and Greek  
Office: Dodd 210  
Phone: 504.282.4455 ext. 3315  
E-mail: cray@nobts.edu

**Mission Statement**

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 one-week course students are given guidance in the development and writing of a prospectus for the dissertation. Prerequisite: a research proposal must be submitted to the student's guidance committee by the April 1/November 1 deadline. The research proposal must be approved by the division of study by the last day of the semester.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. The student will understand the basic principles of research.
2. The student will produce a "draft" prospectus for the dissertation within four weeks of completing the course.

**Textbooks**

**Required Texts**

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.

**Recommended Texts**

Cone, John D., and Sharon L. Foster. *Dissertations and Theses from Start to Finish*. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2006.  
Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018  
Pyrzczak, Fred, and Randall R. Bruce. *Writing Empirical Research Reports*. 8th ed. New

York: Routledge, 2017.

## Style Guides

Biblical studies students:

*The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines*, 2nd ed. (2014)

Psychology and counseling students:

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed.

All other students:

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

## Course Teaching Methodology

This course utilizes one-on-one instruction, lecture, and group discussion.

## Course Requirements

1. Each student is expected to study carefully the required texts, complete pre-course assignments, attend all class sessions, and utilize the library extensively.
2. Each student is expected to submit a completed “draft” of a prospectus to the professor for the course no later than July 11, 2021.

Because evaluating prospectuses can take up to 9 weeks depending on the number of students in the class, you may not receive feedback on your document before mid-April.

## Assignments to be Completed Prior to the Class Sessions

In order to maximize the time in the course and to prepare an acceptable prospectus, it is crucial that you do extensive work prior to the course. ***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.*** Pre-assignments include:

1. Watch and listen to the PowerPoint files under the “Course Documents” section on Blackboard.
2. Read *Practical Research: Planning and Design*

Read meticulously chapters 1-6. Be familiar with the various types of research in chapters 7-11.

After identifying your research methodology, read in detail and master the contents of the appropriate chapters. You should be conversant with the methodologies which will be used in your research.

Note: If you are using a specialized methodology (such as rhetorical analysis), you should master the research methodology prior to the course.

3. Read *The Craft of Research*.

Be prepared to discuss the contents in class.

4. Focus the thesis

***If at this point you have not had sufficient guidance from your Guidance Committee Chairperson in focusing your Research Proposal, seek help before coming to the class.***

5. Review the appropriate style guide.

6. Do extensive reading in the area of the research problem.

Read extensively beyond that done in preparing the Research Proposal. If you are not familiar with the work in the field and/or specific methodologies, you will not know how to focus your thoughts.

Keep in mind that for the prospectus, you will need to do the following:

- (1) **Order immediately** any resources such as books and dissertations that you will need to include in the "Review of Related Literature." Before the course begins you should read at least 2 dissertations that employed your intended research methodology.
- (2) Develop the "Review of Related Literature" section. Know the literature before you come to class. What have others done in this field of research?
- (3) Include a detailed outline of the plan of research—a detailed, step-by-step description of the data gathering and interpretation process, etc.

In order to accomplish the above, you must be familiar with the literature. The more reading you do prior to the course, the easier this process will flow.

Come to the class with a **written annotated bibliography of 15-20 key works** related to the research problem.

***Failure to demonstrate having done adequate reading in the proposed area of research is justifiable grounds for dismissal from the course.***

7. Become familiar with the attached sample outlines.

8. Read the two student proposals assigned and be prepared to give feedback during class meetings. Assignments will be made after proposals are submitted on May 14.

### **Evaluation of Grade**

This is a pass/fail course. Students must successfully complete each component of the course in order to receive a passing grade.

## Schedule

The class meets Monday through Friday. Tentative meeting times are indicated on the schedule below, but adjustments and additional class meetings may be needed. In addition, time will be scheduled for peer group sessions and private conferences with the professor(s).

***Plan to be involved in research and writing, and available for all of each class day.***

**Think of this as a five-week course**, as you will have a lot of work to do after the week of class time.

<b>Tentative Class and Private Conferences Schedule</b>	
<b>Mon</b> 8:30-11:30	Review of the format and function of a prospectus Student's presentation of research question and problem Peer group discussions
1-4	Individual conferences with professor
<b>Tues</b> 8:30-11:30	State of the Research Student presentation of state of research Peer group discussions
1-4	Individual conferences with professor Peer group discussions
<b>Wed</b> 8:30-11:30	Individual conferences with professor
1-4	Individual conferences with professor
<b>Thurs</b> 8:30-11:30	Methodology Student presentation of methodology section Peer group discussions
1-4	Individual conferences with professor

<b>Tentative Class and Private Conferences Schedule</b>	
<b>Fri</b> 8:30-11:30	Individual conferences with professor
1-4	Individual conferences with professor

## **Additional Suggested Resources**

### Form and Style

*Chicago Manual of Style*. 17th 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.

### Mixed Methods

Flick, Uwe. *Doing Triangulation and Mixed Methods*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage, 2018.

### Qualitative Research—General

Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018. [This is a helpful introduction to qualitative research design.]

Flick, Uwe. *Designing Qualitative Research*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage, 2018.

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

Marshall, Catherine, and Gretchen B. Rossman. *Designing Qualitative Research*. 6th ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2016.

### 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—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.

#### 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.

#### 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.
- Flick, Uwe. *Doing Grounded Theory*. Los Angeles: Sage, 2018.
- Strauss, A., and J. Corbin. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998.

#### 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 – Skills

- Banks, Marcus. *Using Visual Data in Qualitative Research*. 2nd ed. London: Sage, 2018.
- Barbour, Rosaline S. *Doing Focus Groups*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage, 2018.
- Brinkmann, Svend, and Steinar Kvale. *Doing Interviews*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2018.
- Creswell, John W. *30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2016.

#### Quantitative Research Design

- Ary, Donald, Lucy Chesser Jacobs, and Asghar Razavieh. *Introduction to Research in Education*. 7th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2005.
- Borg, Walter R. *Applying Educational Research*. 3rd ed. New York: Longman, 1993.
- Kerlinger, Fred N. *Foundations of Behavioral Research*. 3rd 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.)*

#### A. The Thesis and Its Setting

1. The thesis (research question, thesis statement, purpose)
2. The hypotheses
3. The definitions of terms [if needed]
4. The assumptions [if needed]

#### B. The Review of the Related Literature or State of Research

#### C. The Importance of the Study

#### D. 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.

1. Section 1 [use a descriptive subheading that fits your research]

In a narrative format cover the appropriate items such as:

- (1) The data needed [*primary and secondary -- be specific*]
- (2) Criteria governing the admissibility of the data
- (3) The location of the data [*specific...i.e., not “in books in the library”*]
- (4) The means of obtaining the data
- (5) 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.”*]

2. Section 2

E. The Qualifications of the Researcher

F. The Outline of the Proposed Dissertation (organized by chapters)

G. 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.)*

- A. The Problem and Its Setting
  - 1. The statement of the problem
  - 2. The hypotheses
  - 3. The definitions of terms
- B. The Review of the Related Literature
- C. The Importance of the Study
- D. Method
  - 1. Subjects
  - 2. Measures
    - a. Validation
    - b. Reliability
  - 3. Procedure
  - 4. Data analysis
- E. The Qualifications of the Researcher
- F. The Outline of the Proposed Study (organized by chapters)
- G. 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.)*

- A. Introduction and Literature Review
  - 1. Literature Section 1
  - 2. Literature Section 2
  - 3. Summary and conclusions
  - 4. Statement of purpose
  
- B. Method
  - 1. Subjects
    - a. Criteria of inclusion in study
    - b. Recruitment of subjects
  - 2. Design
  - 3. Setting and apparatus
  - 4. Independent variables
  - 5. Measures (dependent variables)
  - 6. Procedure
  
- C. Results
  - 1. Statistical procedures
  - 2. Data presentation
  - 3. Interpretation of the data
  
- D. The Qualifications of the Researcher
  
- E. The Outline of the Proposed Dissertation (organized by chapters)
  
- F. Appendixes
  
- G. 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 designs)**

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

A. Introduction

1. Problem and significance (in related literature)
2. Focus and research questions
3. Limitations of the study

B. Research Design

1. Overall strategy and rationale
2. Focusing on the specific settings, population and phenomenon
3. Sampling people, behaviors, events, and/or processes
4. Issues of entry, reciprocity, personal biography, and ethics

C. Data Collection Methods

1. Participation in the setting
2. Direct observations
3. In-depth interviewing
4. Document review

D. Recording, Managing, and Analyzing Data Resources for the Study

1. Time line
2. Level of data collection
3. Personnel needed
4. Resources needed

E. The Value and Logic of Qualitative Research (Criteria of soundness)

F. The Qualifications of the Researcher

G. The Outline of the Proposed Dissertation (organized by chapters)

H. Appendixes

I. 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.)*

A. Introduction

1. Statement of the problem
2. Purpose of the study
3. The grand tour of question and subquestions
4. Definitions
5. Delimitations and limitations
6. Significance of the study

B. Procedure

1. Assumptions and rationale for a qualitative design
2. The type of design used
3. The role of the researcher
4. Data collection procedures
5. Methods of verification
6. Outcome of the study and its relation to theory and literature

C. The Qualifications of the Researcher

D. The Outline of the Proposed Dissertation (organized by chapters)

E. Appendixes

F. 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.)*

- A. Introduction
  - 1. Statement of the problem
  - 2. Review of the literature
  - 3. Questions and/or hypotheses
- B. Methodology
  - 1. Subjects
  - 2. Instruments
  - 3. Procedures
- C. Analysis of data
  - 1. Data organization
  - 2. Statistical procedures
- D. Significance of the study
  - 1. Implications
  - 2. Applications
- E. Time schedule
- F. Qualifications of the researcher
- G. Outline of the proposed dissertation
- H. Selected bibliography

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