LAIDLAW COLLEGE
Te Wananga Amorangi

585.715 Research Topic
Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

Campus/Delivery Mode: Distance Learning

2015
NQF Level: 7, 15 credits

CONTENT OVERVIEW

The actual lessons of the course are designed to prepare you for your own research work, which will take up most of the time you will need to dedicate to this course. The lessons listed below will take place in the first weeks of the course, after which you will be working independently with the support of your tutor and the guidance of your research supervisor. The course has four formal lessons:

One – The research process

The first lesson describes what research *is*, and overviews the process you are likely to follow in your own research. It also addresses working with a supervisor.

Two – Ideas, questions and planning

Lesson two is concerned with assisting you to prepare a research proposal, which requires you to formulate a research topic and plan of action.

Three – Finding and using information

The third lesson addresses how to find and evaluate material for your research. It specifically mentions how to use the Laidlaw library and how to properly reference others' ideas.

Four – Writing for effect

The fourth and final lesson provides tips for writing well, including how to evaluate the ideas of others and how to argue a point and reason through writing. Preparing your research presentation is also addressed.

ASSESSMENT TASKS AND DUE DATES
There are five assessment tasks for this course.

1. Participation in Online Forum

Learning Outcomes:	1 & 2
Due Dates	Midnight Sunday at the end of semester 1 weeks 2, 4, 6, 10
Percentage Weighting:	10%
Word Count:	As specified below

Throughout the semester you will be required to write four postings of approximately 200 words for the online forums in the Moodle course area. These postings will be in response to given questions relating to your research.

2. Research proposal

       Learning Outcomes: 1
       Due Dates   Midnight Sunday at the end of semester 1 week 7
       Percentage Weighting: 15%
       Word Count: 1000 words

Your research proposal will outline your topic of research and overall research plan. It is a document of critical importance to your overall completion of the course.

Your research proposal will need to be 1,000 words, excluding bibliography. It should contain a clear research statement, a statement of methodology and philosophical issues relating to your research, a draft structural outline, and a brief bibliography. You may change the research question outlined in your proposal later should you need to for the purposes of successful completion.

Please note that in this course, you may not plan research projects that interact with human subjects through interviews or surveys. This is because such projects require detailed ethics approval, and there is not sufficient time to process this throughout this course.

3.   Research paper

       Learning Outcomes: 2, 3, 4
       Due Dates   Midnight Sunday at the end of semester 2 week 11
       Percentage Weighting: 55%
       Word Count: 6,000-7,000 words

Your research paper should be of a very high standard. Technical (writing and formatting) and content accuracy are imperative. Your bibliography should include annotations on seven key sources.

The final submission of your research paper must be completed to the style requirements set out in the Distance Learning Study Guide available on Moodle. The research paper will be marked by your tutor, with consideration of comments made by your supervisor.

4. Presentation

       Learning Outcomes: 4
       Due Dates   Semester 2 Study Week
       Percentage Weighting: 10%
       Length: 15-20 minutes

You are required to present your research findings in an online presentation forum. The presentation forum will permit the sharing of voice, PowerPoint slides, and document pages.

5. Diligence and interaction in the course of supervision

       Learning Outcomes: 2, 3
       Due Dates   Throughout the year
       Percentage Weighting: 10%

Supervisor interaction is a core element of your research. It is vital that you handle the relationship well and prove reliable in your communications with your supervisor. Your supervisor will award this grade based on your communications with him or her.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

Online Forum

Before beginning your first online discussion, please see the grading grid (rubric) on the "online discussion assignment coversheet" for further details on how these criteria will be applied.

- Engagement with material
- Constructive engagement with others
- Structure and presentation
- Timeliness

Research proposal
- Clear and concise research statement
- Well developed and clear methodology and philosophy
- Initial bibliography showing good awareness of literature
- Communication and Presentation: Clarity, format, spelling, grammar; Annotation and bibliography

Research paper
- Critical and independent perspective, well developed flow of logic
- Comprehensive research showing good grasp of subject matter
- Very high level of technical accuracy and formatting
- Well annotated bibliography (at least seven key sources) and extensive bibliography showing good interaction with the literature
- Communication and Presentation: Clarity, format, spelling, grammar; Annotation and bibliography

Presentation
- Research presentation reflects a critically aware and comprehensive grasp of subject matter
- Demonstration **of good communication skills**

Diligence and interaction in the course of supervision

This will be awarded as an overall mark by your supervisor. Your attendance at and preparedness for supervisor meetings, correspondence with your supervisor during your project and willingness to utilize your supervisor's input will all be included in the grade.

LEARNING HOURS

Lessons & Forums	20 hours
Proposal	30 hours
Meetings and supervisor contacts	10 hours
Conducting research and preparing paper	80 hours
Presentation	10 hours
Total	**150 hours**

TEXTBOOKS
Required text:

Booth, W. C., G. G. Colomb & J. M. Williams. *The Craft of Research.* 3rd Ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Articles that are bulleted are included on the course CD-ROM for your reference.

Barber, C. J., R. M. Krauss, and J. P. Moreland. *An Introduction to Theological Research.* 2nd Rev

Ed. Lanham: University Press of America, 2000.

Cryer, P. *The Research Student's Guide to Success.* 2nd Ed. Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000.

- Hamilton, Barry W., "Introduction to Theological Research," n.p. Cited 24 December 2004. Online: http://acc.roberts.edu/NEmployees/Hamilton_Barry/INTRODUCTION%20TO%20THEOLOGIC AL%20RESEARCH.htm

- Hamilton, Barry W., "A Model for Teaching Research Methods in Theological Education," n.p. Cited 24 December 2004. http://acc.roberts.edu/NEmployees/Hamilton_Barry/A%20MODEL%20FOR%20TEACHING%2 0RESEARCH%20METHODS%20IN%20THEOLOGICAL%20EDUCATION.htm

- Phillips, E. M., Pugh, D. S., *How to get a PhD.* 2nd Ed. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1994. (Chapter Eight, "How to manage your tutor", included).

Turabian, K. L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations.* 6th Revised Ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.