



*MSS 905: Methods of Missiological Research*  
**July 13 to 17, 2010**

**Doctor of Missiology**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**PROFESSORS**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will prepare the student to develop a synopsis of his/her project prospectus. The relationships among theological inquiry, socio-anthropological inquiry, and missions practice will be examined. Attention will be given to each of the major components of a project prospectus: problem formulation, review of the literature, research methodologies, presentation of findings, and conclusions. Development of a research design, and database for intercultural research will be emphasized.

**OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of this course you should be able to:

- Identify a researchable topic from the published missiological literature that will become the focus of your project
- Choose a research method from one of the quantitative or qualitative methods that will be presented in class that will become the research method that you can employ in your proposal

**METHODOLOGY**

The course will include lectures, practical demonstrations of assessment instruments, class discussions, and library research periods to initiate the literature review, which will in turn, provide the context for further class discussions. The course will be attended by students from three courses: the D.Min., the D.Miss. and the PhD (IS). But it will be presented by three professors who will lead each of these groups at different times to ensure that the specific needs of the necessary course will be met for the student.

## **CLASS TOPICS**

- The quantitative and qualitative differences between missiological research Projects and Dissertations
- Choosing a researchable missiological subject
- How to find, record and organize published research on a missiological subject
- How to create a doctoral level literature review
- How to use various research methods and techniques: case studies, ethnographic research, biblical exegesis, applied research (e.g. program evaluation), questionnaires, interviews, observational techniques, performing content analyses on available data, sampling, appropriate existing measurement instruments
- How to prepare a project proposal for submission to the Intercultural Doctoral Studies committee
- How to improve your academic writing skills

## **PRESCRIBED BOOKS**

Bernard, H.R. (2006). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition). Lanham: AltaMira Press (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc)

## **RECOMMENDED BOOKS**

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams (2008). *The craft of research*, (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cheney, Theodore A. R. (2005). *Getting the Words Right: 39 Ways to improve your writing* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.) Cincinnati, OH: Writer's Digest Books.

Galvan, Jose L. (2006). *Writing literature reviews: A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences* (Third Edition). Glendale CA: Pyczak Publishing.

Myers, William R. (2000). *Research in ministry: A primer for the Doctor of Ministry program* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Chicago, IL: Exploration Press.

Single, P. B. (2010). *Demystifying dissertation writing: A streamlined process from choice of topic to final text*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Press.  
(This is a brand new publication and covers some subjects such as choosing a topic, developing a focus statement [research problem] and how to build the focus statement

out to a one-page outline and further into a long outline. It also has a great chapter on overcoming writer's block)

Strunk, William and E. B. White. (2000). *The Elements of Style*, (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Macmillan.

Turabian, Kate. (2007). *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean (2008). *Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Wilbers, Ken (2000). *Keys to Great Writing*. Cincinnati, OH: Writer's Digest Books.

Zinssler, William (2006). *On Writing Well*, (4th ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Pre-Session***

We have chosen a research volume on anthropology because it presents the field of research in a manner that most closely approximates the fields of theology and missiology. The book contains a variety of chapters on issues that may not be directly related to a specific research topic and we have created a reading grid (see attachment) to assist the student in pre-session preparation.

### ***Post-Session***

You will be required to submit a synopsis of your formal D.Miss. Project Prospectus as a post-session requirement of this class. The requirements for this synopsis will be discussed during the session (see *Guidelines for D.Miss. Project Prospectus*). There will be no due date for the proposal and the expected "next steps" in the Dissertation development process will be discussed in detail.

**General Guidelines for Formal Writing Assignments:** Each writing assignment should be typed, double-spaced in a Times New Roman 12 point font. It should contain your name and should conform to Turabian or APA academic style manual. The paper must be well-structured, clearly written, and grammatically correct. Make sure someone proof reads your paper before you submit it to avoid typographical, grammatical and editorial errors. Papers which do not engage the appropriate bibliographic resources will be returned for rewrites (In future courses papers which have not done so will be rejected.)

**\*\*All work must be submitted electronically as Word Document attachments to Johan Mostert at AGTS by e-mail ([jmostert@agts.edu](mailto:jmostert@agts.edu)). Please include your last name as the first word in the file name.**

**Students with Disabilities:** If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Office of Student

Services. Contact Student Services, 1435 N. Glenstone Ave, Springfield, MO, 65802, (417) 286-1081 or email: [studentservices@agts.edu](mailto:studentservices@agts.edu). Students are required to provide documentation of disability to Student Services prior to receiving accommodations.

**Non-Discriminatory Language.** All AGTS students, employees, and faculty members are urged to use non-discriminatory language in both verbal and written communication at the Seminary. While AGTS does not endorse the following websites, they provide more information on non-discriminatory language:

- General Principles: [http://www.randomhouse.com/words/language/avoid\\_guide.html](http://www.randomhouse.com/words/language/avoid_guide.html)
- Gender: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/apa/gender.html>.
- Racial and Ethnic Identity: <http://www.apastyle.org/race.html>.
- Disabilities: <http://www.apastyle.org/disabilities.html>.
- Age Discrimination: [http://www.randomhouse.com/words/language/avoid\\_guide.html](http://www.randomhouse.com/words/language/avoid_guide.html).

## **GRADING PROCEDURE**

Due to the unique nature of this module, there will be no grade given for this class. This will be considered a “pass-fail” class. Failure to successfully pass this class would jeopardize the student’s ability to present a project that would be acceptable to the Intercultural Doctoral Studies Committee.

## **SPECIFIC DATA**

Prepared by Johan Mostert D.Phil., March 9, 2010

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE GLOBAL MISSIONS DEPARTMENT**

The specific learning outcomes for the programs of the Global Missions Department at AGTS include that the student will be able to:

1. make decisions, live and serve according to revealed truth and the will of God
2. develop biblical theology of missions which addresses the contemporary missional context
3. utilize the tools of the social sciences to develop a plan to communicate the gospel in word and deed to persons of another culture
4. facilitate the ongoing process of contextualization as missional leaders and communities of faith in specific settings
5. articulate a Spirit driven missiology and praxis
6. identify, exemplify and foment biblical leadership

The specific learning outcomes for the Doctor of Missiology include that the student will be able to:

1. master the missiological and cognate disciplines
2. understand the theological disciplines and their relationship to missiology
3. provide leadership in cross-cultural ministries and the capacity to engage in research and teaching

### **SPECIFIC DATA**

Prepared by DeLonn Rance, Ph.D., May 13, 2009.

## ADDENDUM 1

### AGTS (GMD) RUBRIC FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF STUDENT WRITING

The quality of a student’s writing will be assessed using the following rubric. Each element will be assessed on a 5-point scale where 5 represents superior work, adequate for publishing. A score of 1 would signify that the work requires significant re-writing and a score of 3 reflects adequate, passable quality.

	5	4	3	2	1
<b>A. TOPIC SELECTION/RATIONALE FOR STUDY 10%</b>					
1. The student gives a clear, cogent rationale for the choice of the subject 2%					
2. The chosen topic is important (worthy of study), relevant, and/or serves to contribute to the knowledge in the field 2%					
3. The research and/or content goals are clearly stated (what data or information they intend to acquire) 2%					
4. There’s evidence that the student has read widely enough to identify the major issues 2%					
5. The student understands the issues and is able to critically reflect on their relevance to the chosen topic 2%					
<b>B. RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE TOPIC 40%</b>					
1. The student has chosen a research methodology that is adequate to the stated goals of the study 10%					
2. The outline and content of the paper reveals that the investigation of the topic is comprehensive and covers the topic adequately 20%					
3. The outline of the paper is coherent and provides a logical development from concept to concept 10%					
<b>C. CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS 30%</b>					
1. The student has engaged a broad spectrum of views related to the chosen topic 10%					
2. The student demonstrates an ability to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of differing views or positions 10%					
3. The student shows evidence of independent thinking which evaluates objectively differing views or positions before declaring their own position 10%					
<b>D. BASIC WRITING SKILLS 20%</b>					
1. The paper is mechanically sound in terms of word usage and selection, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, syntax and grammar 5%					
2. The appropriate style format was used (Turabian or APA) 5%					
3. The writing style is clear, straightforward, and easily understood 5%					
4. The development of thought is aided by well-constructed paragraphs, transitional sentences and summations that facilitate the flow of thought 5%					

## ADDENDUM 2

### TIPS FOR WRITING BETTER PAPERS

\*The principles below should be applied to the preparation of the papers.

#### TRUISMS

1. Reading and re-reading the instructions aid in the preparation of superior papers.
2. A good research paper requires hard work. Within five minutes or less of reading a paper, a professor can spot poor work.
3. Writing skills improve with more writing; there are no shortcuts.

#### WHAT PROFESSORS EXPECT IN RESEARCH PAPERS

1. Solid research in *primary sources*
2. Familiarity and interaction with *secondary sources*
3. Logical organization
4. Original analytical reflection
5. Integrity in writing
6. Consistency in following the designated style manual (e.g., APA, Turabian, etc.)

#### WHAT STUDENTS EXPECT OF PROFESSORS

1. Clear instructions about the nature of the paper
2. Explanation of research methodology for the particular area of study
3. A clear rationale for the grade should be provided through comments written on the paper
4. The weight of the grade based first on the content of the paper, secondly on the mechanics.

NOTE: This does not minimize the problem of mechanical errors, typos, etc., because they interfere with the logical argumentation of the paper. If the number of mechanical problems and typos on a paper exceed the number of pages, the grade will likely be reduced by one grade point. This represents a fair approach to grading. If more than one mistake on the average appears on a page, then the paper has been poorly prepared both mechanically *and analytically*.

#### GUIDELINES:

1. Before writing, prepare a detailed outline of what you intend to address; this will prevent rambling and guarantee logical development.
2. Somewhere on the first page, a clear statement of purpose needs to be given, one that explains the nature of the paper and what it intends to achieve. The conclusion should then link closely with the statement of purpose.
3. Write in good written, not spoken English. All sentences should be complete and coherent. Most people, especially preachers, write like they talk. (Of course, profs remain immune to such temptations!) This means that redundancies redundancies will inevitably appear in the text. While repetition and alliteration may be effective in the pulpit, such devices can be unnecessary and distracting in print. Avoid constant repetitions of proper names (use pronouns), expressions, etc. Also, use adjectives, adverbs and emphasis words (such as “very”) sparingly.
4. After completing the first draft, look carefully through the paper and eliminate unnecessary sentences; continue this approach with later drafts. “What?” you ask, “more than one draft?”

5. Keep a sharp eye on paragraph development. The topic presented in the opening sentence must govern what follows. If a paragraph becomes a collection of several unrelated thoughts (e.g., the last sentence has no connection to the opening sentence), then the logical argumentation has broken down. Furthermore, make certain that the paragraph properly fits into the development of the section.
6. Following the introduction of a person's name (e.g., Harry Jones), only use their last name and/or pronouns afterward. Do not use the person's first name in subsequent references; this would imply that you are a personal friend of the person cited.
7. Minimize the use of verbs of being: am, is, are, were, and being. They are are are usually overworked. Regular active verbs make stronger sentences.
8. If in doubt about a long sentence construction, break into two or more sentences.
9. How should you refer to yourself in the paper? I suggest the occasional use of the pronoun "I." Referring to yourself as "this writer" or "this author" or "he or she who scribeth this paper" appears awkward in my estimation. At the same time, avoid using the first person plural ("we," "us," "our") and the second person singular and plural ("you"). Refer to others in the third person singular or plural. Consistency avoids confusion and keeps the reader on course.
10. Use direct quotations sparingly. A direct quotation should only be used when a source says something of such importance that the reader would be deprived by not being aware of it. ***The frequent use of direct quotations and especially block quotations indicates that the writer has not adequately digested the material; long or frequent quotations then serve as "stuffers" in the text.***
11. Documentation: How many references numbers should be used? How many sources listed in a bibliography? Arbitrary numbers for these questions represent an artificial methodology, irrelevant at the graduate level. Review the rationale for references. Use the best sources, the number of which will vary with any given paper.
12. The bibliography should be strongly represented in the references notes. Avoid "stuffing" the bibliography with little used resources.
13. Beware of plagiarism. A safe rule of thumb is that only three to five words from a source may be used without quotation marks and a reference number. Plagiarism is the theft of resources written by other people.
14. Use headings, as well as sub-headings (if necessary). Do not use "chapters"; those would be for theses and dissertations.
15. Proofread the paper carefully and by all means use a spell-check. Have someone else—"THE HONEST FRIEND"—or several people read the paper to look for typos, mechanical errors, and especially for clarity and logical development. Learn from their suggestions, but don't accept them uncritically.
16. THOU SHALT NOT (1) justify the right margin; (2) use large or very small fonts.
17. Gender inclusive language should always be used except when referring to the members of the Trinity.