



On-Campus Course Syllabus

Res 501: L1

Research in Theological and Biblical Studies

Fall 2023

Class Information

Day and Time: Monday: 4:45pm – 7:15pm

Room Number: E 211

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Ty Kieser

Instructor Email: tkieser@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: (214) 818-1306

Instructor Office Hours: Monday: 1–3 PM; Wednesday 9–11 AM

Sign up [here](#)

Course Description and Prerequisites

This course prepares students for academic success through instruction on the research process, research strategies, thesis topic selection, familiarization with form and style for papers and theses, use of library materials, computerized databases, and bibliographic resources. Attention is given to research writing, communication, and documentation.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course, the student should be able to:

- 1) Navigate scholarly resources, citations, and tools efficiently and prudently.
- 2) Develop and defend a research strategy that exhibits charity and erudition.
- 3) Execute clear, nuanced, and charitable scholarly contributions.

Required Textbooks

Anizor, Uche, *How to Read Theology: Engaging Doctrine Critically and Charitably*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. (978-0801049750)

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say / I Say*. 5th ed. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2021. (978-0393538700).

Kibbe, Michael. *From Topic to Thesis: A Guide to Theological Research*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016. (ISBN: 978-0830851317).

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 9th ed. Revised by Wayne G. Booth, et al. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018. (ISBN: 978-0226430577).

Weston, Anthony. *A Rulebook for Arguments*. 5th ed. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2018. (ISBN: 978-1624666544).

Course Requirements and Assignments

- 1) **Participation and Discussion Preparation** (25%; 2.5 pts each): Students will engage with the readings carefully and they will serve as a key touchstone for our discussion in class. The format/structure of these is largely up to the student so long as it prepares you to engage in discussion and it can be submitted on Canvas. At minimum, students should have 5 discussion points for every class. This might be 5 key quotes and their significance, 5 questions raised and elaborated upon from the readings, 5 supported claims about the readings/the topic of the readings, etc. These will be submitted on Canvas and are due before class begins on the day they are assigned.
- 2) **Workshop Items** (40%): Students will complete 11 different workshop items in preparation for 11 of our class sessions. See the point values, rubrics, and details on Canvas. These will be submitted on Canvas and are due before the beginning of the next class—e.g., if one is assigned on Monday the 4th, it must be submitted before class on the 11th.
- 3) **Précis** (15%; 3 + 12 pts): Students will submit a précis of their thesis or a current research paper. This précis will build off workshop items but should be edited and refined in order to reflect development in the students thinking and growth in their execution. It will be presented to the class (3 pts) and then edited into a final draft (12 pts). See Canvas for the rubric, expected sections, and details.
- 4) **Commitments of a Conversationalist** (20%): Students will develop a personal list (1,000-1,250 words [excluding footnotes]) of commitments detailing key components that students will execute in future research/writing/speaking. It need not be structured in paragraph format, but ought to engage (e.g., quote, draw from, disagree with, etc.) and cite the course readings thoroughly. The paper will be graded on (A) engagement with readings; (B) depth and coherence of rationale; and (C) specificity and creativity of commitment. See Canvas for the rubric, expected sections, and details.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

Late work

If your assignments are submitted late, your grade will be reduced by 10% for each calendar day late. However, any missed assignment may be submitted end of the semester for up to 50% credit.

Extra Credit

No extra credit will be available in this class.

Class Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they (1) anticipate being able to attend every on-campus class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, or (2) participating in academically related activities as identified in online-course schedules including synchronous class sessions conducted remotely by video, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any missed information. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades. Professors apprise students of such information in course syllabi.

Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships must meet specified requirements of various departments at the college and should consult relevant sections of the *Academic Catalog*. To ensure such funds will not be forfeited, students are responsible for contacting the proper departments to ascertain any specific course participation requirements and consequences of not meeting such requirements. Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships should consult the Financial Aid office.

While Criswell College is a non-attendance taking institution, it nevertheless must demonstrate that students begin their courses in order to comply with Federal Aid regulations. Accordingly, students must participate in academically related activities during census periods. Failure to meet this requirement will result in students being administratively dropped from courses.

Academically related activity is defined as any course-related activity that may be used as evidence of attendance. Examples include:

- physical presence in a classroom during a class session with the instructor present,
- participation in a synchronous remote video class session with the instructor present,
- submission of an academic assignment, quiz, or exam,
- participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction,
- participation in a study group or discussion board that is assigned by the instructor,
- documentation showing that the student and a faculty member corresponded about the academic subject of the course.

NOTE: Logging into a Canvas course alone and logging into a Synchronous Online class session without active participation or with the camera off are not considered attendance.

NOTE: A census period begins on the first day of a semester/term and runs through the end of the last day to drop courses. During the census period, attendance data is collected in order to demonstrate compliance with Federal Aid regulations. There is no census period for winter terms since there is no last day to drop courses.

Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide

further details regarding the campus closure’s impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student’s Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses’ objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus’s closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An “I” may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar’s Office. The “I” must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the “I” will become an “F.”

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college's academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student's course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student's work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Research and Writing Standards

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu. Login credentials are emailed to students near the beginning of the semester.

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence in any subject matter taught at the college. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly (<https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>) or by visiting the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203. For questions, call 214.818.1373 or email at tutoringcenter@criswell.edu.

Course Outline/Calendar

August 21st — Introduction

Read: Webster, “Habits” [recommended]

Assignment: Watch movie as selected by class (due: before next class)

1) Research

August 28th — Topics

Read: Kibbe, *FTTT*, 9–76

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Kibbe Part 1

Assignment: Workshop Item #1: Topics and Texts

September 4th — Labor Day: No Class

September 11th — Sources

Read: Kibbe, *FTTT*, 77–148

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Kibbe Part 2

Class: Library Resource Meeting — Meet w/ Valeri Knighten

Assignment: Workshop Item #2: Patterns and Gaps

September 18th — Reading

Read: Anizor, *How to Read Theology*

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Anizor

September 25th — Technology

Watch: Introduction to Zotero [[link](#)]

Watch: Intermediate Introduction to MS Word [[link](#)]

Watch: Advanced Introduction to MS Word [[link](#)]

Watch: Introduction to shortcut keys [[link](#)]

Watch: Introduction to OneNote [[link](#)]

†another program can be substituted for any of the above with permission

2) Writing

October 2nd — Naming the Conversation

Read: Graff & Birkenstein, *They Say / I Say*, 1–106

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Graff & Birkenstein Part 1

Assignment: Workshop Item #3: Trial Theses

October 9th — Entering the Conversation

Read: Graff & Birkenstein, *They Say / I Say*, 107–232

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Graff & Birkenstein Part 2

Assignment: Workshop Item #4: Annotated Bibliography & Ranked Readings

October 16th — Student Development Week

Assignment: Workshop Item #5: Research Plan

October 23rd — Research and Writing Test Cases

Read: Student Selections from four different formats – (1) article, (2) one book, (3) one dictionary entry, (4) one historic source

Assignment: Workshop Item #6: Formatting & Footnotes

October 30th — Revision

Read: Turabian, *AMFW*, 9.1–13.4

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Turabian

Assignment: Workshop Item #7: Revision

November 1st — Thesis Prospectus Deadline for those registering for a thesis next semester

November 6th — Style

Read: Pinker, *Sense of Style* [PDF]

Read: Williams & Bizup, *Style* [PDF]

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Pinker, Williams & Bizup

Assignment: Workshop Item #8: Style

3) Reasoning

November 13th — Analyzing Argumentation

Read: Weston, *Rulebook for Arguments*, 1–50

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Weston Part 1

Assignment: Workshop Item #9: Argument Exercises

November 20th — Thanksgiving Break

November 27th — Art of Argumentation

Read: Two Articles or Chapters — Selections made by students

Assignment: Discussion Preparation — focus on the nature/structure of the arguments (and not the content)

Assignment: Workshop Item #10: Literature Argument Demonstration

Reminder: Précis Presented next week

December 4th — Argumentation Test Cases

Read: Weston, *Rulebook for Arguments*, 51–100

Assignment: Discussion Preparation, Weston Part 2

Assignment: Present Précis

Assignment: Workshop Item #11: Argument Demonstration

December 11th — Arranging Argumentation

Assignment: Commitments of a Conversationalist (due December 14th at 11:59 PM)

Assignment: Précis Final Draft (due December 14th at 11:59 PM)

Workshop Descriptions

Workshop Item #1: Topics and Texts (3 pts)

- Name 3 topics and 3 subtopics of each topic that you're interested in
- Determine one key piece of recent research (i.e., last 10 years) for each subtopic
- Briefly narrate why you are interested in three of these subtopics

Workshop Item #2: Patterns and Gaps (3 pts)

- Select 10 sources relevant to one of the subtopics above
- Discern the general significance of each source for the subtopic*
*you don't need to read these all cover to cover; look at the synopsis, table of contents, introductions, and book reviews
- Name the patterns and the gaps that you see from these sources

Workshop Item #3: Trial Theses (4 pts)

- Provide 15 potential theses for your project
- Select 3 of the most distinct theses and narrate the uniqueness and significance of each

Workshop Item #4: Annotated Bibliography & Ranked Readings (4 pts)

- Provide an initial annotated bibliography of these three sources (from workshop #2 list)
 - This should focus specifically on a thesis in these sources which relate to your subtopic and include the fundamental rationale for their conclusions.
- List 25 sources in order of relevance to your research, using at least three categories: (1) Sources that you're relying upon for definitions and landscape; (2) sources that are fundamentally supportive; (3) sources that are fundamentally criticized/nuanced.

Workshop Item #5: Research Plan (4 pts)

- Include each of the following (nb. multiple vocations require research, so this may be helpful whether you feel called to be preacher, teacher, writer, leader, counselor, etc.):
 - 30 Years — what 3 descriptions do you hope characterize your ministry/research/leadership
 - 20 Years — what 3 projects do you want to have completed (e.g., books written; class sequences taught; sermon series preached; initiatives administrated)
 - 10 Years — what one (big) research goal do you have (include the context/occupation)
 - 5 Years — plan for career what focus/topic/virtues do you want to characterize your initial research trajectory
 - 2 Years — Plan for degree+
 - Summary of your focus each semester
 - 1 year
 - Monthly summary of your research —at least one task with its specified focus (e.g., particular books to read; sections to write; feedback).

Workshop Item #6: Formatting & Footnotes (4 pts)

- Properly format footnotes **and** bibliographic information for each of the four kinds of sources included here — (1) two articles, (2) two book, (3) two dictionary entries, (4) two historic sources [that are not from the same series]
- Properly format at least two pages of drafted text (e.g., use the annotated bibliography), including: (A) at least one heading and one sub-heading, (B) at least one block quote, (C) at least one quote within a quote, (D) at least one hyphen, en dash, and em dash

Workshop Item #7: Revision (4 pts)

- Revise five pages of a classmate’s writing, checking for formatting, punctuation, style, clarity, and coherence.

Workshop Item #8: Style (3 pts)

- Revise five pages of your own writing, especially for clarity and style—indicating changes through “track changes”

Workshop Item #9: Argument Exercises (3 pts)

- Complete argumentation exercises (on Canvas)

Workshop Item #10: Literature Argument Demonstration (4 pts)

- Outline the key claims in the two selected readings and indicate the necessary premises for each

Workshop Item #11: Argument Demonstration (4 pts)

- Outline the key claims in your own argument and indicate the necessary premises for each

Précis Template

What? (Topic) <i>What journey are you on?</i>	My project focuses on ‘x’ question/ issue/ constructive concern/ etc.
Who? (Interlocutors) <i>Who are you listening to/speaking to along the way?</i>	My project engages and draws from . . . X Theologian(s) Y Sources (name ≥ 7) The main person I am trying to convince is . . . Z theologian/friend/pastor and his/her _____ view on the topic

<p>Why? (Rationale) <i>Why is this trip worth the effort?</i></p>	<p>This issue is important/ interesting/ significant (to me) because . . .</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'x' reason 2. 'y' reason 3. 'z' reason
<p>Where? (Conclusion) <i>Where is the destination?</i></p>	<p>I am going to argue:</p> <p>Primary conclusion</p> <p>[Secondary conclusion/contribution]</p> <p>[Tertiary conclusion/contribution]</p>
<p>How? (Method & structure) <i>How do you navigate your way to the destination?</i></p>	<p>In order to come to the above conclusion, I need to show that _____, _____, and _____ are true . . .</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. <p>Etc.</p> <p>I will present this argument according to this outline</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Step 1 2. Step 2 3. Step 3 <p>etc.</p>
<p>So What? (Implications and significance) <i>So what are the benefits of taking this journey—for you and for your reader?</i></p>	<p>This paper has implications beyond the scope of my explicit argument. A few include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implication 1 2. Implication 2 <p>etc.</p>