

Spring 2010
PM 500CO: *Writing for Ministry*
Erskine Theological Seminary
P.O. Box 668, Due West, South Carolina 29639
Phone (864) 379-6571 Fax (864) 379-3171 Website <http://www.erskine.edu/seminary>

Instructor/Class Meeting Information

Instructor: Joyce Coggins

Email: coggins@erskine.edu

Office: Bowie Divinity Hall 8, Due West Campus (conferences by appointment)

Meeting Time: 9 am - 5 pm

Meeting Location: Columbia Campus

Meeting Dates: Saturdays, February 13, February 27, March 20, April 17

Course Website: <http://hybrid.erskineseminary.net> The enrollment key (access code number) will be emailed to students.

Course Description

PM 500CO Writing for Ministry

This course is designed to prepare students for successful academic and career writing. Students produce a portfolio including a variety of pieces such as a documented theological essay, an academic book review, personal reflection pieces, news and feature articles, and career correspondence. *Elective (required in some instances). Two hours.*

PM 500CO IS A HYBRID COURSE, COMBINING CLASSROOM AND ONLINE LEARNING. ACCESS TO THE INTERNET IS REQUIRED.

Course Objectives

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. To that end, the instructor intends that by the end of the term, students will be able to do the following:

1. Format an academic paper in Chicago style.
2. Organize and write an academic paper according to Erskine Seminary guidelines.
3. Explain the rationale behind crediting sources.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature and consequences of plagiarism.
5. Credit sources using Chicago style documentation.
6. Employ appropriate style and grammar resources to compose one or more academic papers in Standard Written English.
7. Compose six or more of the following career writing pieces in SWE, following appropriate guidelines for each genre. Assignments may include the following types of writing:
 - faith statement
 - autobiographical composition
 - bulletin/order of service
 - news/feature article
 - devotional
 - personal vision statement
 - email message
 - letter of recommendation
8. Produce a portfolio of original pieces, samples, and guidelines for future use and reference.

Required Materials

Strunk, William Jr., and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Allyn and Bacon, 2000. ISBN-13 978-0205309023

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN-13 978-0-226-82337-9

Students should also have ready access outside of class to a collegiate dictionary and *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

NOTE: Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskine.edu/seminary/bookstore>. There you will find links to familiar vendors and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

Students should purchase the following materials for their portfolios:

- a 1” ring binder
- five tab dividers with pockets (Avery 11906, available at office supply stores, is recommended.)

All other course materials will be provided in class or on the course website.

A LAPTOP COMPUTER AND FLASH DRIVE FOR IN-CLASS WRITING ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

Attendance and Punctuality

Due to the participatory nature of this class, students are expected to attend all class meetings and to be on time. Students **must** attend the first meeting of the course. Those who cannot attend the first course meeting should not register for the course or, if already registered, should complete the drop/add form and drop the course. (If the drop/add form is not completed and turned in to the Registrar, the student will still be charged for the course and will receive an “F” grade.) If students have to be absent for part or all of another class meeting day, they are still responsible for all work missed and all work due. A student who misses as much as one full class day or its equivalent in late arrival or early departure should consult with the professor to see if it is still possible to pass the course.

Assignments

A written list of class assignments and due dates will be provided at the first class meeting. Assignment materials are located on the course website at <http://hybrid.erskineseminary.net>. Completed assignments will be submitted via upload to the course website.

Make-up Work, Late Work, and Incompletes

Work missed due to absence may be made up at the discretion of the instructor. Work that is submitted late (or in a format other than Microsoft Word) will be penalized one letter grade for each day it is late. A grade of Incomplete or “I” is reserved for students who have met most of the course requirements, but have been prevented by *extraordinary* circumstances from completing all the course requirements. An “I” is given solely at the discretion of the instructor.

Grading

Grades will be based on the following criteria and will be assigned according to the Master's-level grading system as listed in the Erskine Seminary Catalog:

Participation ----- 20%

- participation in class discussions
- participation in class learning activities

Writing Assignments -----70%

- successful completion of 6-8 writing assignments

Portfolio ----- 10%

- successful completion of a portfolio containing student writing, guidelines, and samples

Drop/Add/Withdrawal

Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the registrar for this class, it is a binding contract and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a "drop/add" form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If a student wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, he/she must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student's receiving a grade of "F" for the course and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

Language about God and Humanity

Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

Conduct in Theological Discussions

Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

Chapel Attendance Policy (Due West Campus Only)

All morning and afternoon on-campus classes (except for Friday and Saturday courses) carry a chapel attendance requirement. Consult the catalog or registration booklet for the specifics of the chapel attendance policy. There is a per chapel fee if you attend fewer chapels than required.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use in writing of wording or ideas produced by others without crediting the author and/or source from which the material was taken. As the following statement indicates, plagiarism is a serious offense that undermines both the witness and integrity of the Christian community:

Plagiarism injures the community by inhibiting the recognition and cultivation of gifts imparted by the Spirit. Clearly unattributed use of the words and/or ideas of others fails to give appreciative recognition of their gifts. But this illegitimate appropriation of the gifts of others also blocks the recognition and cultivation of the actual gifts of the person engaged in plagiarism.

Plagiarism creates an atmosphere of falsehood in the community's discernment and cultivation of gifts, both within the Christian community and in God's larger creation. Since freedom comes only by way of truth (Jn. 8:32), such falsehood can only result in captivity, and therefore has no place in the Christian community.

On this basis, the Seminary adheres to the following general requirements for the acknowledgement of sources of academic work. These requirements apply to both print and electronic media.

1. Quotations. Any sentence or phrase that a student uses from another source must be placed in quotation marks or, in the case of longer quotations, clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a note) by a precise indication of the source.

2. Paraphrasing. Any material that is paraphrased or summarized must also be specifically acknowledged in a note or in the text.

3. Ideas. Specific ideas that are borrowed should be acknowledged in a note or in the text, even if the idea has been further elaborated by the student.

4. Bibliography. All the sources consulted in the preparation of an essay or report should be listed in a bibliography.

In addition to plagiarism, the following related practices are also unacceptable compromises of the truth requisite to a free community:

1. Multiple submission. Failure to obtain prior written permission of the relevant instructors to submit work which has been submitted in identical or similar form in fulfillment of any other academic requirement at any institution.

2. False citation. The deliberate attribution to, or citation of, a source from which the material in question was not, in fact, obtained.

3. Submission of work done by someone else, either with or without that person's knowledge. Neither ignorance of the regulations concerning academic violations nor personal extenuating circumstances are an adequate defense against charges of plagiarism. The Seminary's provisions for "due process" apply in cases of alleged plagiarism.

In cases of documented plagiarism or documented theft of another student's work, the offending student will automatically receive the following penalties: failure of the course(s) in which plagiarized or stolen work is submitted, dismissal from the Seminary for a minimum of one semester, and forfeiture of the right to tuition refunds during the semester(s) affected.

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