



**ERSKINE**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

*For Christ and His Church*

## **Introduction to Theological Education Columbia Campus PM 501CO**

Instructor: [Mary E. Lowe, Ed.D.](#)

Email: [mlope@erskine.edu](mailto:mlope@erskine.edu)

Phone: 864.379.6669

Fax: 864.379.8887

*Two credit hours*

Meeting Time: 9 am - 5 pm

Meeting Location: Columbia Campus

Meeting Dates: Saturdays, June 5, June 26, July 17, August 14

Course Website: <http://hybrid.erskineseminary.net/>

The enrollment key (access code number) will be emailed to students' Erskine email addresses prior to the first class meeting.

This course is considered a hybrid class. Hybrid courses are those that blend face-to-face classroom teaching and learning with online technologies in order to provide students with more opportunities for learning, spiritual formation through community building, and deeper insight and reflection. Internet access is a must for this course.

### **Course Description**

The design of this course is to make students aware of their needs for whole person development in preparation for Christian service. Students will explore learning skills that enhance academic performance as well as ministry effectiveness. Students will also explore foundational matters in spiritual formation that equip them to facilitate spiritual development in themselves and others. Finally, students will review student handbook content.

### **Course Objectives**

1. To expose students to an understanding of the essential skills of self-directed learning in a graduate seminary context.
2. To promote students' ability to evaluate learning situations and determine the best learning strategy for them to employ, given the constraints of their own learning style and the educational outcomes of the particular learning experience.
3. To provide students with knowledge of the Erskine Seminary student handbook.

4. To equip students with an understanding of graduate level expectations of academic work.
5. To understand the Biblical concepts and definitions in the field of spiritual formation.
6. To understand and identify the dynamic process of Christian spiritual growth and be able to help others to use spiritual disciplines for growth.

## Resources

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.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The ETS SBA will receive a modest percentage of the profits from students' and professors' purchases through this portal. 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.

*Orienting Adults to Learning in Theological Education*, Steve & Mary Lowe, 2005 (available in online classroom)

*Assessing Adult Learning in Theological Education*, Steve & Mary Lowe, 2005 (available in online classroom)

Cooper, D. (2008). *So You're Thinking About Going to Seminary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press.

Lowe, S., & Lowe, M. (2007). *Seeing Through a Glass Darkly: An Ecosystems Model as a Paradigm for Spiritual Formation*. (available in online classroom)

## Recommended Websites

<http://www-distance.syr.edu/sdltools.html>

<http://www-distance.syr.edu/sdlskills.html>

[http://www.pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2005/Internet\\_Status\\_2005.pdf.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2005/Internet_Status_2005.pdf.pdf)

<http://www.plagiarism.org/>

[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_plagiar.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html)

## Grading Criteria and Scale

The following grading scale, from the Seminary catalog assigns a numeric value to each completed assignment. All scores receive equal weighting. Your final grade is the average of each grade received. The professor computes a letter grade on the basis of your average raw score using the following grade scale recently adopted by the Seminary faculty:

- A Level Work = Exemplary ability to differentiate constituent parts; assess and critique theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, and relevant literature; and the ability to reason in a logical and compelling manner.
- B Level Work = Reflects above average grasp of the subject matter; displays a superior ability to use new knowledge in a creative manner; and can demonstrate an above average ability to discriminate among alternative viewpoints.
- C Level Work = Adequate but not exceptional ability to think cogently and clearly; sufficient ability to understand and comprehend subject matter; and a satisfactory ability to integrate and organize course concepts in a logical and coherent manner.
- D Level Work = Inadequate mastery of basic facts and information presented in the course; insufficient or inappropriate use of common terms and language indicating an inadequate grasp of the material; and an inferior ability to analyze and judge proposals, ideas or concepts.

#### Erskine Seminary Grading Scale:

100-95	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D-
94-93	A-	83-80	C		
92-91	B+	79-78	C-	69-0	F
90-88	B	77-76	D+		
87-86	B-	75-72	D		

#### Course FAQs

1. Students must submit all assignments to the professor via e-mail attachments unless otherwise notified. Where directed students will also upload assignments to the online classroom for other student reactions.
2. Please use Microsoft Word when submitting assignments electronically.
3. All assignments should be clearly marked on the e-mail subject line with the student's last name and assignment number. Failure to include this information will result in a returned assignment.
4. 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.

## Course Assignments

### Module One: Community

During the first section of the course, students will:

1. Make weekly contributions to the discussion board postings.
2. Read the Cooper text and write one summary paper.
3. Read selected portions of the Student Handbook and complete quiz.

### Module Two: Competencies

During the second section of the course, students will:

1. Make weekly contributions to the discussion board postings.
2. Read and complete selected portions of the Lowe/Lowe text and workbook.
3. Write a Reflection Paper.

### Module Three: Completeness

During the third section of the course, students will:

1. Make weekly contributions to the discussion board postings.
2. Read and complete selected portions of the spiritual formation and inventory as well as maintain a faith development journal.
3. Write a final, critical integrative paper.

## Assignment Components

### Module One: Community

1. **Respond each week** to the question posted to the discussion board and **reply** to at least one other student (if applicable). I will post a question under “Third Place” each week; students should post no later than midnight of week’s end (Sunday evening).

**Worth: 10 points**

2. Upload the Cooper Summary Paper to the online classroom by the end of Section 1 (before second class meeting). This paper should be 3 – 5 pages in length and should integrate, summarize, and provide a cogent overview of the Cooper book. Please include insights you gained as well as recommendations for other students. **Graduate-level writing is expected.**

**Worth: 10 points**

\*Steps to upload your assignment:

1. Find the “Summary Depot” in the online classroom.
2. Click on that link and you will find the assignment listed there.

3. Click on "Add a new discussion topic" and this will take you to the upload area
4. Type in your name and introduction title (i.e. Joe's Summary) in the subject line.
5. Type a BRIEF explanation in the message section (i.e. Cooper Summary)
6. Click on the "browse" feature at the bottom of that paper and find your paper.
7. Double-click on your document and select "post to forum" shown at the bottom of the screen.

Steps to download (or read) others' assignment (optional):

1. Find the "Summary Depot" discussion forum in the online classroom.
2. Click on that link and you will find student postings listed.
3. Click on the title of the student posting listed under Discussion.
4. Click on the Word document in that posting.
5. Select "open" to read the document instantly or "save" to save the document to your desktop folder.

3. Read selected portions of the Student Handbook and complete comprehensive quiz. Due the fourth week of the course.

**Worth: 10 points**

### Module Two: Competencies

1. **Respond each week** to the question posted to the discussion board and **reply** to at least one other student (if applicable). I will post a question under "Third Place" each week; students should post no later than midnight of week's end (Sunday evening).

**Worth: 10 points**

2. Read selected portions of the Lowe/Lowe text, complete learning competencies. Due throughout second section.

3. Write a Reflection Paper based on readings and completed inventories. This paper should be 8-10 pages in length and provide reflect an assessment of yourself as a self-directed learner. This paper should include new insights, perspectives gained, and expectations for future learning. **Graduate-level writing is expected. Due: July 16.**

**Worth: 20 points**

### Module Three: Completeness

1. **Respond each week** to the question posted to the discussion board and **reply** to at least one other student (if applicable). I will post a question under "Third Place" each week; students should post no later than midnight of week's end (Sunday evening).

**Worth: 10 points**

2. Read selected portions of the spiritual formation materials and maintain a **Faith Development Journal**. Due throughout the third section.

3. Write a final, critical integrative paper. This will serve as your final exam for the course. The paper will demonstrate your ability to **integrate** class discussions,

required readings, and your own personal reflection in light of what you have learned about yourself as an adult self-directed learner. Your paper should give evidence of your exposure to and understanding of the course concepts presented in lectures, your **critical engagement** with the required texts for the course, and the results of any learning inventories. Finally, your paper should **incorporate concepts** learned in the Spiritual Formation materials along with your own reflections and insights. Your paper should also reflect graduate level writing skills. This paper should be 10-12 pages long, double-spaced, and follow seminary writing guidelines. **Due: August 14.**

**Worth: 30 points**

## WRITING THEOLOGICAL PAPERS

The seminary has produced a *Writing Theological Papers* document that guides a student through the process of producing a high quality theological paper. It is included as part of the materials for this course located in the online classroom and is part of your Student Handbook provided by the seminary.

Please edit your paper for typographical errors, misspelled words, stylistic miscues, and grammatical mistakes. The paper should be double-spaced and constitute original work written for this course only and cannot include material previously used in another course or for another purpose. Please read over the notation regarding the seminary policy on plagiarism included at the end of this syllabus. Your use of the work or thoughts of another without proper citation and acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism. **Content found at an Internet web site is construed to be copyrighted material written and produced by another person.** Undocumented wholesale use of words from an Internet web site passed off as the student's own work in a research paper of this sort constitutes plagiarism and considered a violation of the seminary plagiarism policy. Students who are determined to have violated the seminary's policy on plagiarism will receive a grade of zero for the paper, will not be allowed to re-submit another paper, and will have a written record of the violation added to their permanent student record. Further violations of the seminary's plagiarism policy could result in temporary or permanent dismissal from the seminary.

### Relevant Institutional and Class Policies

**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.

**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").

**Late or Incomplete Work:** The grade of "I" or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of "I" is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An "I" in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become "F."

**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 one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one 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.

### **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:

Occurrences of plagiarism shall be considered 'documented' when the instructor is able to produce documentary evidence that plagiarism has occurred, and when

the instructor has reason to believe that the plagiarism was motivated by a deliberate attempt to receive credit for ideas or work not the student's own. Where such plagiarism involves the theft of the academic work of another student, whether at Erskine or any other institution, it shall be designated 'documented theft of another student's work.'

The instructor involved, in consultation with the Dean, may recommend measures deemed appropriate. 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
- Forfeiture of the right to tuition refunds during the semester(s) affected

Before such penalties are imposed, a committee of at least three faculty members must agree that they are appropriate to the case. Appeals in such cases may only be addressed, in writing, to the President of Erskine College and Theological Seminary.

## Bibliography

*(The following bibliography is formatted according to APA standards, a departure from the seminary-required Turabian style.)*

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[http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_CyberFaith\\_Report.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_CyberFaith_Report.pdf)
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### **Recommended Journals and Periodicals**

*The American Journal of Distance Education*.

*International Council for Distance Education Bulletin*.

*Ocotillo: The Journal of Adult Learning*.

*International Journal of Lifelong Education*.

*Journal of Adult Training* (published by the Evangelical Training Association)