



BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY

UNIT OUTLINE MASTER OF THEOLOGY MASTER OF MINISTRY

UNIT TITLE	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THEOLOGIAN I: INTRODUCTION & ORIENTATION
UNIT CODES	X74097
UNIT STATUS	Core
HOST FIELD	-
PREREQUISITE/S	-
INCOMPATIBLES	-
CREDIT POINTS	0cp
REQUIREMENTS	One full day seminar plus evening colloquium
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Each semester
PREPARED BY	BCT Postgraduate Research Committee
UNIT COORDINATOR	Dr Richard Colledge
TEACHING STAFF	A team coordinated by the BCT Postgraduate Research Committee and consisting of faculty from each of the research fields within theology, plus visiting postgraduate educationalists from local universities.
DATE PREPARED	10 September 2003

Rationale

This is the first of two related units designed to facilitate the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate research at a masters level, and to enable students to construct a coherent and productive coursework masters program, with their masters thesis research interest as the integrating focus. Both units are practical in orientation and focus on the needs and requirements of theological research and researchers. The emphasis is on masters-level research and the production of masters theses and dissertations.

Relation to Program

X74097 Research Methodology for Theologians I and X74098 Research Methodology for Theologians II are compulsory for all students in the BCT's masters programs, and are both taught each semester. This unit is taken first and assists students to develop a viable thesis/research proposal, while the second unit deals with the practicalities of writing the thesis. In conjunction with these methodology units, students are required to attend at least four postgraduate research colloquia, and make a presentation to, at least one, colloquia. These will appear on Regular attendance at all postgraduate colloquiums (2 per semester) throughout the duration of their masters program is highly recommended.

Aims

This unit aims to facilitate the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate masters-level research in theology, and to assist students with the construction of a coherent and productive coursework masters program which meets the needs of individual students in respect of their theological background and theology and ministry research interests.

Objectives

By the time of the awarding of this unit,

- 1) Participants will have successfully made the transition from an undergraduate to a postgraduate research culture and profile.
- 2) Participants will be consolidating and expanding skills in library and information technology based research.
- 3) Participants will have put together a plan for a coherent and productive coursework masters program.
- 4) The participants will already have begun to learn how to compose a first level provisional viable and credible research project proposal.
- 5) By such means and their own effort, participants will be in process of developing a masters level competency in theological or ministerial research.

Content

- Introduction to the postgraduate research culture within the BCT and within the various Fields of Study promoted by the BCT
- Defining the difference between undergraduate and postgraduate research,
- Planning a BCT coursework masters and sustaining it over the long haul;
- Developing towards a research question for masters coursework thesis and working towards a credible proposal
- Introduction to library and other information technology resources available for research in theology and ministerial studies.
- Introduction to professional resources available within the BCT.
- The importance of the BCT Colloquium structure and of using it well.
- Other input relevant to postgraduate research from postgraduate educationalists,

Organisation and Teaching Strategies

- 1) Input and discussion in a *one day seminar*, or a series of *evening seminars* with input from all Fields and library and other faculty within the BCT, from the Dean of the BCT, and from visiting postgraduate educationalists concerning topics relevant to theological and ministerial research and the research profile of the BCT.
- 2) Colloquia, consisting in input relevant to postgraduate research from visiting postgraduate educationalists from local universities, especially Griffith University; plus time for set-piece student presentations including of their thesis proposals and discussion of such, as well as less formal research in progress reports.
- 3) For the convenience of the BCT postgraduate research community and for the sake of more effective communication of information and ideas, the BCT also provides its postgraduate students and that of the Griffith School of Theology with their own presence on its website and an email mailing list.

Assessment

In line with its essentially practical focus, this unit will be credited to the student on the successful completion of the following tasks:

- Attendance and participation in the seminar(s).
- Attendance and active participation in at least one colloquium

“Active participation” is defined minimally as a ‘research in progress’ report.

The unit will be credited to the student with the grade of SS.

References – Core

Barzun, Jacques, and Graff, Henry, F. *The Modern Researcher*. Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., N.Y., 1970.

- Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G. and Williams, Joseph M. *The Craft of Research*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1995.
- Conrad, Linda, Editor. *Developing as Researchers*. Griffith Institute for Higher Education, Griffith University, Nathan, 1994.
- Howard, Keith and Sharp, John A. *The Management of a Student Research Project*. Gower Publishing, Aldershot, Hampshire, 1983.
- McIntosh, Lawrence D. *A Style Manual for the Presentation of Papers and Theses in Religion and Philosophy*. Centre for Information Studies in association with ANZTLA and ANZATS, Wagga Wagga, 1994.
- McIntosh, Lawrence D. *Religion and Theology: A guide to current reference sources*. Centre for Information Studies, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, 1997.
- Material specific to individual research Fields of Theology and Ministry within the BCT will be supplied by faculty from those fields in the unit of the seminar series.

References – Supplementary

- Bruce, Christine. *Developing Students' Library Research Skills*. HERDSA, PROBLARC, Campbelltown, NSW, 1992. Esp. Section Three: Postgraduate Students.
- Crotty, Michael. *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1998.
- Graves, Norman, and Varma, Ved, *Working for a doctorate: A guide for the humanities and social sciences*. Routledge, London, 1997.
- Moses, Ingrid. *Supervising Postgraduates*. HERDSA, Univ. of NSW, Kensington, 1985.
- Zuber-Skerritt, Ortrun, editor. *Starting Research - Supervision and Training*. Tertiary Education Institute, University of Queensland, 1992.