

## Syllabus

### Instructor Information

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Instructor:

Robert Mager, PhD (Theology), DEA (Political and Legal Philosophy)  
Retired Professor, Université Laval (Quebec City)  
Sessional Lecturer, Regis College

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Rendez-vous: online, by appointment, during and after the seminar

### Course Identification

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Course Number: TSM 5022  
Course Format: Online  
Course Name: Qualitative Research and Design  
Course Location: Toronto School of Theology  
Class Times: Monday June 7 to Friday June 11, 2021, 8:30-11:30 AM (Toronto's time)  
Monday June 14 to Thursday June 17, 8:30-11:30 AM  
Friday June 18, 8:00-12:00 AM (extended session)  
Prerequisites: TSM5020; TSM5021

### Course Description

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This course gives an overview of qualitative research methodology in light of the student's respective research theory and design. It is focused on the elaboration of the DMin thesis proposal, and is intended to prepare students for creating research projects and preparing their thesis proposal. At the end of the course the student hands in a first draft of their thesis proposal as part of their course evaluation. Students will learn to identify a research question, explore a variety of qualitative methodologies and tools for analysis which can be applied in action research projects, and how to report the results of their research. The course will also address the ethics of research, and key aspects of research including the preparation of literature reviews and bibliographies.

### Course Resources

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#### Required Volumes

Bennett, Zoë, Elaine Graham, Stephen Pattison, and Heather Walton. *Invitation to Research in Practical Theology*. London: Routledge, 2018. [Electronic Resource, UofT Library](#).

Lichtman, Marilyn. *Qualitative Research for the Social Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014. [Electronic version available at UofT Libraries](#).

Sensing, Tim. *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011. [Kindle](#) (through your favorite online vendor).

Swinton, John, and Harriet Mowat. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. London: SCM Press, 2016. **Kindle** (through your favorite online vendor).

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. 9th ed. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018. **Kindle** (through your favorite online vendor).

### **Other Required Documents**

Other documents, mostly journal articles and book chapters, are listed on the reading list and on the daily session pages, which can be found in the Pages section of the course website (on Quercus). They can be downloaded through the UofT libraries website or are provided on Quercus.

### **(Optional) Reference Documents**

(A separate bibliography comprises various resources for the exploration of qualitative methodologies. DMin theses can be found through the list of doctoral theses on [UofT Libraries](#) website. The thesis proposal is normally included in the appendixes of the thesis.)

Translation Bureau. “[Writing Tips Plus](#).” 2021.

*Chicago Manual of Style (The)*. 17<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago ; London : The University of Chicago Press, 2017. Accessible online through UofT libraries.

Creswell, John W., and Cheryl N. Poth. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2018.

Lichtman, Marilyn. *Qualitative Research for the Social Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014. Electronic version available at UofT Libraries.

Miller-McLemore, Bonnie J., ed. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2012. Electronic version available at UofT Libraries.

Mills, Jane, and Melanie Birks, eds. *Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2017. Electronic version available at UofT Libraries.

TST’s [DMin Handbook 2020-21](#).

### **Course Website(s)**

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT [Quercus login page](#) and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in, look for the My Courses module, where you’ll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Quercus is based on the [Canvas learning platform](#).

**Online Sessions:** in the menu of the course website, click on “Bb Collaborate”. Make sure you have a high-speed Internet connection (ideally plugging an Ethernet cable, otherwise through an exclusive Wifi connection), and a headset (combining microphone and earphones).

## Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

This course is one of three required or “core” courses within the DMin program. The “Degree Level Expectations” describe the level of knowledge and skill that is expected from a doctoral graduate. Those expectations determine specific “DMin Learning Objectives and Outcomes.” The third column explains the “Contribution of the Course to these Outcomes”. The fourth column indicates how these outcomes will be assessed.

DOCTORAL “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS” (DLE)	DMIN LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES	CONTRIBUTION OF THE COURSE TO THESE OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT OF THESE OUTCOMES
<b>1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge</b>			
A thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice.	<p>1. Critically analyze local and global contexts of ministry by drawing on advanced knowledge of concepts, theories, and frameworks from theology and cognate disciplines.</p> <p>2. Demonstrate specialized knowledge of ministry for practice and inquiry through the integration of practice-based and research knowledge, drawing on contextual theologies.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 1 and 2:</b></p> <p>i. Students will identify the areas of knowledge and specific sources which are most relevant for their research topic.</p> <p>ii. A Practical Theological framework will be offered as a guide for building the student’s thesis proposal.</p>	<p><b>Outcomes 1 and 2:</b></p> <p>➤ An annotated bibliography assesses depth of knowledge according to a specific area of inquiry.</p> <p>➤ A first draft of the thesis proposal assesses both practice-based and research knowledge.</p>
<b>2. Research and Scholarship</b>			
<p>a. The ability to conceptualize, design, and implement research for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the research design or methodology in the light of unforeseen problems;</p> <p>b. The ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, sometimes requiring new methods; and</p> <p>c. The ability to produce original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, and to merit publication.</p>	<p>3. Evaluate and select appropriate qualitative methods of research for addressing problems in ministry contexts.</p> <p>4. Plan, design, and carry out a research project that addresses a problem and offers an innovation to transform the practice of ministry.</p> <p>5. Evaluate and interpret research outcomes in relation to the state of current knowledge in the area, and to provide meaningful and substantive contributions to broader ministry contexts.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 3:</b></p> <p>TSM5022 provides the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct qualitative research.</p> <p><b>Outcome 4:</b></p> <p>i. Students will develop their research proposal, with special attention to theoretical and methodological issues.</p> <p>ii. Students are led to choose amongst different models of Theological Reflection.</p>	<p><b>Outcomes 3 and 4:</b></p> <p>The draft thesis proposal will testify to the students’ ability to build an appropriate research design incorporating and justifying the proper theoretical, methodological, and theological elements.</p>
<b>3. Level of Application of Knowledge</b>			
The capacity to undertake pure and/or applied research at an advanced level; and ii) contribute to the development of academic or professional skills, techniques, tools, practices, ideas, theories, approaches, and/or materials.	<p>6. Design evidence-informed solutions to complex problems of practice that demonstrate advanced understanding and implementation of theological and other frameworks.</p> <p>7. Develop new practices, methods, approaches or programs through the application of ministerial expertise and practice-</p>	<p><b>Outcomes 6 and 7:</b></p> <p>i. The seminar will offer many opportunities to discuss how the Practical Theological framework can be used to address different contextual problems and situations.</p> <p>ii. Students will be presented the specific rules guiding the design of</p>	<p><b>Outcomes 6 and 7:</b></p> <p>➤ The draft thesis proposal will assess mastery of research design.</p> <p>➤ The annotated bibliography will testify to the integration of proper bibliographic rules.</p>

DOCTORAL “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS” (DLE)	DMIN LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES	CONTRIBUTION OF THE COURSE TO THESE OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT OF THESE OUTCOMES
	based research methods to address needs within a variety of ministry contexts.	an academic paper, with special attention to properly formatting bibliographic references.	➤ A daily exercise fosters the integration of lectures and readings.
<b>4. Professional Capacity and Autonomy</b>			
<p>a. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex situations;</p> <p>b. The intellectual independence to be academically and professionally engaged and current;</p> <p>c. The ethical behaviour consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research;</p> <p>d. The ability to evaluate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.</p>	<p>8. Demonstrate thorough knowledge and practice of professional and ethical guidelines for the responsible conduct of research and academic integrity.</p> <p>9. Demonstrate growth in spiritual maturity and commitment to religio-moral values for faith a life, in meaningful collaboration with a variety of stakeholders in the ministry context and professional community.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 8:</b></p> <p>i. TSM5022 explores ethical issues in research.</p> <p>ii. Students will be encouraged to develop an awareness of their personal situation, biases and responsibilities as researchers.</p> <p><b>Outcome 9:</b></p> <p>i. The CLG (Cohort Learning Group) will reflect together upon the Practical Theological framework and various research strategies.</p> <p>ii. The course will facilitate the integration of research goals and means, religious perspectives, and personal faith, through significant moments of worship.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 8:</b></p> <p>The draft thesis will demonstrate ability to adhere to research ethics guidelines, including an awareness of the researcher’s subjective stance.</p> <p><b>Outcome 9:</b></p> <p>Class participation grades are assigned in relation to the quality of student interaction with the peer group.</p>
<b>5. Level of Communication Skills</b>			
The ability to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas, issues and conclusions clearly and effectively.	10. Disseminate knowledge in the area of ministry that is accessible and applicable to practitioners in the field.	<p><b>Outcome 10:</b></p> <p>i. The course encourages students to share knowledge with each other.</p> <p>ii. Key rules and requirements of academic writing will be examined.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 10:</b></p> <p>Criteria for assessing the draft thesis proposal will include clarity, preciseness, and conformity to the rules and requirements of academic writing.</p>
<b>6. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge</b>			
An appreciation of the limitations of one’s own work and discipline, of the complexity of knowledge, and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods and disciplines	<p>11. Analyze and articulate the limitations of a research project in the practice of ministry.</p> <p>12. Identify global and ecumenical perspectives that challenge the premises and perspectives of the practice of ministry in a particular context.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 11:</b></p> <p>i. Examination of the Research Ethics Protocol will entail the identification of potential limitations of the research projects.</p> <p>ii. Students will be encouraged to identify both the strengths and the limitations of their research methodology.</p> <p><b>Outcome 12:</b></p> <p>Discussion of research projects and methodologies will include the consideration of denominational particularities, ecumenical issues and global challenges.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 11:</b></p> <p>The draft thesis proposal will identify the strengths and limitations of its theoretical approach and research methodology.</p> <p><b>Outcome 12:</b></p> <p>The draft thesis proposal will address denominational particularities, ecumenical issues and global challenges relevant to the particular research project.</p>

## Evaluation

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### Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in three areas:

(1) Participation (20%): Students are expected to attend the online sessions, read the required texts and participate in discussions. A short daily integration exercise will help them to identify their findings and questions. By teams of two persons, they will be entrusted the leadership of a 10-minute class devotional/worship. The daily integration exercise is **due every day of the seminar, 6 PM**.

(2) Annotated Bibliography (30%): Students will search for relevant literature about their research interest, resulting in an annotated bibliography of at least 25 sources (books, articles, electronic resources). For each item in the bibliography, students will write a short paragraph indicating how the resource relates to their topic, and how it will support the development of their research. **Due: Friday July 30, 2021.**

(3) Draft Thesis Proposal (50%): Students will prepare a draft Thesis Proposal in accordance with the appropriate section (D9) of the *DMin Handbook 2020*. **Due: Wednesday August 11, 2021.**

### Grading System

- A+ (90-100)
- A (85-89)
- A- (80-84)
- B+ (77-79)
- B (73-76)
- B- (70-72)
- FZ (0-69: Failure)

Please see section A7.8 of the *DMin Handbook 2020* for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc.).

### Late work

Students are expected to meet the course deadlines, both of the TST and of the colleges in which they are registered, and are advised to plan their coursework accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet TST deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by TST. All deadlines set can be found under “[Key Academic Dates](#)” on the TST website.

### Course grades

Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with [University grading policy](#) or college grading policy.

## Policies

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### Accessibility

Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's [Accessibility Services](#) offices. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

### Plagiarism

Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the [Graduate program Handbooks](#), as well as the University of Toronto [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "[Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing](#)" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges.

### Other academic offences

TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#).

### Back-up copies

Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

### Obligation to check email

At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. *Forwarding* your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

## Email communication with the course instructor

The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. All email communications from students in conjoint programs should be sent from a utoronto email address. Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

## Schedule

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*This is just a provisional outline. For an updated schedule including materials and required readings, see the daily session pages in the “Pages” section of the course website on Quercus.*

*All sessions are held from 8:30 to 11:30 AM (except Friday June 18: 8:00 to 12:00).*

### Monday June 7, 2020

- Introduction
- What is “Research”?
- What is “Practical Theology” (PT)?
- Overview of the Seminar

### Tuesday June 8

- I, the Researcher
- The Context
- Reflexivity

### Wednesday June 9

- The Object
- The Problem
- Working with sources
- Bibliographies/Literature Reviews

### Thursday June 10

- Theory and Practice
- PT Research as Theorizing
- Theoretical Assumptions and Stance
- Theory and Theology
- PT as Hermeneutical Task

### Friday June 11

- Theological Interpretation
- The Outcome: Theological Proposal
- Evaluation of the First Week

### Monday June 14

- Methodology (I)
  - About Methodology
  - The Research Question
  - General Goals and Specific Objectives

### Tuesday June 15

- Methodology (II)
  - Qualitative and Quantitative Research
  - An Overview of Qualitative Methods I
  - Research Projects in the Making I

### Wednesday June 16

- Methodology (III)
  - An Overview of Qualitative Methods II
  - Research Projects in the Making II

### Thursday June 17

- The Field Inquiry
- Ethical Requirements and Considerations

### Friday June 18 (*special schedule: 8:00 to 12:00*)

- The Thesis Proposal
- The Comprehensive Exam
- Evaluation of the Second Week

## Bibliography

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For a General Bibliography, see the “Pages” section of the course website on Quercus.