

CLA 154: CRITICAL RESEARCH SKILLS

Tuesday, 1:15-4:15 p.m.

Dr. M. Case

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

“A research skills course where students learn how to find and critically evaluate sources, select relevant evidence from reading, organize information, define theses and draw reasonable conclusions. They will also learn the mechanics of writing a research paper and of documenting their research. (Prerequisite: CLA 153 or equivalent)” (Bulletin, p. 104)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

“Attendance at class is mandatory. If a student misses a class, he/she must see the instructor prior to the next class. If the unexcused absences are excessive in the judgment of the instructor, the instructor may direct the student to discontinue the course. A failing grade and loss of credit will result. Should a seminarian miss a number of classes, this will be brought up in discussion regarding the student’s personality and maturity. The student will also bear the academic loss involved.” (Bulletin, p. 45)

STUDENT GOALS

At the end of this course, a successful student should be able (a) to locate and use research sources; (b) to draw information from a text and make a critical evaluation of a source; (c) to write an effective research essay which is organized, demonstrates critical thought, and uses proper citation methods; (d) to know how to avoid plagiarism.

TEXTS REQUIRED

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. Seventh edition.

Lester, James D. and James D. Lester, Jr. *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2007. Twelfth edition.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

1. A 3-ring binder with paper OR a spiral notebook FOR USE IN THIS CLASS ONLY
2. Two expandable file folders which close securely AND 1 plain file folder
3. 3X5 index cards (if you do not do your bibliography directly by computer)
4. 4X6 index cards (if you do not take your notes directly by computer)
5. Pen, pencil, yellow hi-liter

GRADING

Two drafts of the research paper @ 20% each = 40%

Final draft of the research paper @ 60% = 60%

Exercises and presentations graded by plus, check, or minus; plus means all work is completed; check means most work is completed; minus means much work is missing.

Plus pulls the final grade up (example: C to C+). Check maintains the final grade (example: C remains C). Minus pulls the final grade down (example: B- to C+).

In general, NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS will be accepted. Exceptions may apply.