

Module Title:	Individual Study
Module Code:	620 TINS
Level:	6
Credit Rating:	20 Credits
Duration:	Student Learning Time: 200 hours
Teaching Hours:	15 Hours
Academic Responsibility:	Philippe Yates, OFM JCD

Module Aims:

This module aims to develop in students the ability to examine in detail a selected and approved topic in Catholic theology informed by contemporary, high-level, critical theory; to employ suitably sophisticated procedures and levels of academic research; to refine and present views and opinions in an academic fashion; and to deepen their knowledge in a specific area.

In the course of pursuing independent research under supervision before proceeding to the writing of a substantial dissertation, the module aims to develop transferable graduate skills, in particular, problem-solving, expressing ideas clearly, and organizing information in a coherent fashion in a large-scale written work.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the module students should be able to:

1. Identify and explore a suitable and clearly-defined area of research relevant to Catholic theology;
2. Demonstrate a range of skills associated with the identification, retrieval and presentation of source materials;
3. Construct a coherent and extensive dissertation, demonstrating an ability to understand, synthesize and critically assess a range of source material;
4. Engage in intelligent discussion and debate upon the chosen topic.

Indicative Module Content:

An initial study skills programme will ensure that the students are familiar with academic procedure appropriate to work at undergraduate Level 6. It will concentrate on research methods and on the presentation process.

Guidance given will address matters such as literature searches, information gathering, and the use of information technology to enhance the research; and examples of suitable research questions will be given. This guidance will be reinforced through appropriate exercises, where familiarity with academic conventions and style relating to citations, bibliography and textual layout will be expected.

Much of the work will be determined by the nature of the individual topic being researched, and this will be monitored through one-to-one tutorials.

The dissertation preparation will be made through a carefully-sequenced schedule, including the early identification of titles (agreed by both tutors and students), the preparation of an outline plan and bibliography appropriate to the subject studied, and student seminar presentations in which research in progress will be shared.

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

In the Michaelmas term, students will be given a series of lectures, seminars and workshops on literature searches, information gathering, writing styles and the presentation of ideas using a

variety of media. Independent study titles will be agreed with personal tutors and the module coordinator during the Michaelmas term. The initial study skills programme will be followed by approximately 5 hours individual tutorial time over the year.

Assessment:

Assessment is by proposal (20%) and dissertation (80%):

- a proposal in which the student sets out the proposed area of research and explains his/her intended research methodology, with bibliography [1000 words equivalence; 20%].
- A dissertation [4000 words; 80%]

Illustrative Bibliography

Bell, J. (1999)	<i>Doing your Research Project</i>	Open University Press
Chambers, E and Northedge, A (2000)	<i>The Arts Good Study Guide</i>	Open University Press
Coombes, H. (2001)	<i>Research using I.T.</i>	Palgrave
Denscombe, M. (2002)	<i>Ground Rules for Good Research</i>	Open University Press
Fairbairn, G. J. (1991)	<i>Reading, Writing and Reasoning</i>	Buckingham
Higgins, R (1996)	<i>Approaches to Research</i>	Jessica Kingsley
Hill, M (1993)	<i>Archival Strategies and Techniques</i>	Sage Publications
Levin, P. (2005)	<i>Excellent Dissertations!</i>	Open University Press
Van den Brink-Budgen, R. (2000)	<i>Critical Thinking for Students</i>	How To Books