

Module title:	Study Skills for Theology and Franciscan Studies
Module code:	701 TSST
Level:	7
Credit rating:	20 credits
Duration:	Student learning time 200 hours
Teaching hours:	20
Academic responsibility:	Paula Pearce SFO, MA

Module aims:

This course aims to provide participants, who will normally have studied successfully at undergraduate level, with the skills that they need to progress to postgraduate work. The module is conceived on the basis that participants are moving to a level where their work should be comparable with that of professionals working in their field, even if not yet fully demonstrating the depth and confidence exhibited by them. The module is a means by which to develop further students' professional and academic capabilities in handling literature and producing their own academic writing. It will deepen their understanding and skills in engaging with enquiry and particularly in analytical enquiry related to the ways in which theological writing and theories support their professional practice and development.

Learning outcomes:

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

1. An ability to find and critically analyse relevant literature from a variety of sources, including primary and secondary sources and the internet
2. An ability to undertake their own research and write this up in a way which conforms with methodological/historiographical conventions and is accessible to professionals and lay people
3. An ability to critically appraise the differing relationships between research, theory and professional practice in the context of their chosen area of specialism

Indicative module content:

The module will enable participants to develop their study skills and begin to focus upon a particular aspect of theology and Franciscan studies. Students will be able to explore secondary sources not just as a source of information, as at undergraduate level, but as the work of peers. Emphasis will be placed on the need for students to understand and conform with the conventions of academic writing, using academic writers as a basis for peer observation. Participants will be encouraged to see themselves as academics, engaging with work in refereed journals and writing such as book reviews, to understand the culture of peer review and discourse. Students will also be tutored and guided in identifying issues and opportunities related to their own area of interest and professional development needs. Work in the module will include writing an encyclopaedia article and a book review, preparing a literature review, essay planning and referencing. Students will also work as a team to prepare a class presentation. Students will also develop a dissertation proposal, which will be revisited in the final module of the programme as students work on their dissertation.

Supporting notes will be provided for each task, with recommendations regarding appropriate academic journals and models for writing literature reviews and encyclopaedia articles.

Learning and teaching strategies:

Teaching will mainly be through weekly lectures, for which students will be given specific weekly reading assignments and directed towards additional reading. Students' individual research interests will be supported through individual tutorials and directed reading. Throughout the module the active participation of students, through discussion and questioning, is strongly encouraged as a way of developing analytical skills, critical thinking and clarity of expression. Students will also be involved in preparing a class presentation.

In addition to face to face tutorials and group sessions, tutors are readily accessible through other means, providing support through email, telephone and e-learning as required.

Students who do not have the requisite level of skill at the beginning of the module, eg international students who do not have experience of using computers or the internet, will be provided with additional support.

Assessment:

The assessment for the module will total 4,000 words or the equivalent and will address the module learning outcomes. The final outcome will be a portfolio consisting of the following:

- An encyclopaedia article (1,000 words) 25%
- A book review (1,000 words) 25%
- Essay planning and referencing exercise (1,000 words) 25%
- Dissertation proposal (1,000 words) 25%
- Literature review (1,000 words)

The literature review will be formative, unless the dissertation proposal is not attempted (ie Diploma students) in which case it will represent 25% of the assessment.

Illustrative bibliography:

- Ackroyd R and Major D (1999) *Shaping the tools: study skills in theology (exploring faiths)* Darton, Longman and Todd
- Allison B. and P. Race. (2004) *The Student's Guide to Preparing Dissertations and Theses*. 2nd edition. London & New York: Routledge Falmer
- Bailey S. (2006) *Academic Writing. A Handbook for International Students*. 2nd Edition. London & New York: Routledge
- Clegg B. (2006) *Studying Using the Web. The Student's Guide to Using the Ultimate Information Resource*. London & New York: Routledge
- Vyhmeister N J (2008) *Quality research papers for students of religion and theology*, Zondervan
- Wallace M and Wray A (2006) *Critical reading and writing for postgraduates*, London: Sage