



LEAVELL COLLEGE

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

LSCM 4300: SENIOR SEMINAR

Online section

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The mission of Leavell College of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Core Value

Each academic year, a core value is emphasized. This year's core value is *Mission Focus*: "We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandment through the local church and its ministries."

Course Description

The Senior Seminar is designed to complete the studies for the baccalaureate degree. The purpose is to help prepare seniors for ministry and/or graduate studies. Emphasis will be placed on a synthesis of knowledge within each discipline, utilizing research, writing skills, and oral presentation skills. *Successful completion of Research and Writing is a prerequisite for this class. Students must also have earned more than 90 credit hours before enrolling in this course.*

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the semester, you will be able to

1. understand the importance of critical thinking and the necessity of a synthesis of knowledge;
 2. demonstrate through discussion/communication and in written assignments the ability to integrate the various disciplines experiences throughout the Leavell College tenure; and
 3. relate critical thinking and a synthesis of knowledge through the development and defense of the Senior Paper.
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Course Texts

Required readings/links to required readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Because of the online format, online participation is essential. While you are not required to be online at a certain time, you will be responsible for frequent and substantial online participation. Online participation will include discussion board posts and uploads of self-created videos related to the Senior Paper (see #6 and #8 below). Additionally, you will have access to work for designated time periods. Once work has disappeared from Blackboard, you will not be able to access it. If you are astute, you will pay attention to the Course Schedule and plan your schedule accordingly.
2. You will be required to read selected articles, titles of which will be provided in Blackboard. (At times, the actual articles or links to the articles will be provided.) You will then write and submit critiques of the articles. The critiques, one to two paragraphs in length, must be completed and submitted electronically according to the Course Schedule. The critiques should briefly indicate the purpose of the article (1-2 sentences), several key insights of the author and an explanation of why you believe those insights to be key, a discussion of the strengths or weaknesses of those selected insights, and a brief conclusion (1-2 sentences) about the article. You are not summarizing the material but learning to think critically about the author's work. Support your claims with data from the article. *Do not write in first person* for these critiques. Please double space your work. The critiques will be due on the **Tuesday** of the week in which they are assigned. You will submit the critiques as WORD (.doc or .docx) documents via Assignments in Blackboard.
3. You will be **required** to post to the Blackboard discussion board according to the outline posted in the Course Schedule. During the week in which an article is being discussed by means of the discussion board, you are required to post **one major post** (*minimum of 200 words*) **and two responses** (*minimum of 50 words*) regarding each article. A major post is the offering of one's opinion regarding the article read. A response is simply that—a reply to another student's post. The major post must be posted by **Wednesday** of each week, and the two responses must be posted by **Friday** of each week.

Note about framing discussion board posts and responses: Blackboard discussion board posts are very important if you are to receive the best educational outcome for this course. Online posts and responses should be carefully considered, well planned, conscientiously edited, and adequately supported with facts prior to their submission to Blackboard. My suggestion is that you type and save your posts and responses as Word documents so that you can reread, revise, and edit them before uploading them. Then, you can cut and paste them into the appropriate discussion board forum. In this way, you will have taken the time to consider your words carefully so that your post can contribute well to our online discussion. Additionally, by saving them on your desktop or on a flash drive, you will have a record of all your posts for future reference.

Note about online "netiquette": Each person will read course material and interpret it based on his or her experiences. Therefore, someone else may have a different view of

the material than you have. These differing views are what make online conversation so valuable and stimulating. Please respect each person's opinion. You very well may disagree with another person's interpretation of course material or of the discussion questions posed online. You are encouraged to respond to each other's posts (and will be required to do so). In your responses, however, you should never ridicule another student or in any way disrespect his or her post. I reserve the right to remove posts I feel are disrespectful (which, of course, will result in the post not being counted). You can disagree with another person's point of view, but in no post or response should you write something that in any way harms another student.

Note about professor responses to posts: In general, you can expect an online response from me at least once per week. Often in my responses, I will ask you a question or clarification or redirection. If I ask such a question, I do expect your response to that question. My questions back to you mimic the kind of discussion that might occur in a face-to-face setting, so it is important that you answer the follow-up questions. Also, I will not respond directly to every post or response, but I do read ALL posts and responses. Additionally, please note that I reserve weekends for family and church. I rarely respond to posts or emails during the weekend. However, you can expect frequent online interaction from me.

4. You will be required to submit several mini-assignments related to the Senior Paper (thesis paper) that you will be writing. A thesis paper is one in which you are attempting either to defend or deny a thesis statement. For Senior Seminar, the thesis paper must have a biblical basis. *Note: This assignment is an embedded assignment that will be completed by all students for all sections of this course. The rubric for assessing this assignment is attached to this syllabus. Please complete this assignment according to the assessment rubric.*
 - A. The first of these mini-assignments is a well-developed thesis statement and a brief paragraph description of the Senior Paper students intend to write. You must post your one-sentence thesis statement and a brief descriptive paragraph **to the appropriate discussion board forum** according to the time frame indicated in the Course Schedule. The rest of the students must respond to others' thesis statements indicating their perceptions of the appropriateness of the proposed theses. In this way, the class takes ownership of the topics for the papers through thinking through the merits of the proposed topics. Please note that not all topics are appropriate for a thesis paper, and based on class interaction and professor input regarding the topic/thesis, students may have to choose an alternative topic. Late thesis submissions will result in a 4-point penalty on the final paper. Failure to submit the thesis will result in a one-letter-grade penalty on the final paper.
 - B. The second mini-assignment will be a preliminary bibliography of twenty possible sources for the paper. The bibliography is to be annotated, meaning that the student will write several sentences about the source indicating its overall content and its usefulness in the paper. An example of an annotated bibliography entry can be found on page 7 of this syllabus. The annotated

bibliography will be due electronically via Assignments in Blackboard on the date indicated in the Course Schedule. Late submission, lack of annotations, fewer than the required sources, and/or poor Turabian will result in points (between 1-5 points) being deducted from the final paper. Failure to submit the annotated bibliography will result in a penalty of one letter grade on the final paper.

- C. The final mini-assignment will be a detailed outline of the paper. You will not be submitting a rough drafts of your paper, so the outline will be my only chance to assess the logic of the paper. The outline will be due electronically (via Assignments in Blackboard) on the date indicated in the Course Schedule. Late, poor, or incomplete work will result in a penalty of 1-5 points on the final paper. Failure to submit an outline will result in a penalty of one letter grade on the final paper.
5. You will be required to research, write, and present a critical paper (Senior Paper) on the topic approved by the class (with professor input). The paper must have a biblical basis. The paper must be 13-15 pages of text. (This pagination does not include the title page, blank page, contents page, or bibliography.) Papers shorter or longer than the required length will be penalized as follows: two points for each page shorter than the required minimum length, and one point for each page exceeding the required maximum length. The format must be according to the latest edition of Turabian and must use footnotes for citing sources within the paper. Font should be 12-point Times New Roman for the entire paper (text and footnotes). The left margin should be justified. An electronic copy of the latest Turabian Tutor is available in Course Documents. The Senior Paper will be graded on style, format, grammar, and Turabian.

An electronic copy of the paper must be submitted electronically as ONE PDF DOCUMENT (via Assignments) by 11:59 p.m. on the date indicated in the Course Schedule. Papers not submitted by the due date will not be accepted, and you therefore will not be able to pass the course. The professor will upload the PDF copies of all the papers to Blackboard so that all students can access them.

6. The week after the paper has been submitted, you will be required to record yourself giving a 5-10 minute oral defense of the paper. In this defense, you will discuss why you took the particular position on the topic, what you learned from the research, what you believe to be strengths and weaknesses of his or her own paper, and what you would have done differently. The video must be uploaded as an unlisted (not private) YouTube video (the only format to be accepted), and the YouTube link to the video must be sent via email to the professor by 11:59 p.m. on the date indicated on the Course Schedule. I will upload all videos to Blackboard, and all students are expected to view all videos before reading the Senior Papers. If you are late submitting the video, you will incur a 4-point deduction on the final paper grade. If you do not submit a video, your paper will not be read or critiqued, and you therefore will not pass the course.
7. During the last two-three weeks of the course, you will read and critique each other's Senior Papers. I will post a schedule of which papers will be read and discussed for each

of those weeks. You will be completing an evaluation form for **each paper** in the class, and the evaluation forms are counted towards your grade. The process for the critiques will be as follows:

- a. First, consult the schedule so you will know which papers to read during a given week.
 - b. Second, view the video oral defense of the student whose paper you are reading. This step is important as you need to see the person whose paper you are reading. If you read the paper with that person's face and voice in mind, it changes the way you read the paper. You're reading the work of a person you've seen rather than the work of an unknown person.
 - c. Third, download the thesis paper so that you can read it. I'd strongly suggest that you print the paper so that you can mark on it as you will be expected to give the paper a grade.
 - d. Fourth, download the Word version of the evaluation form (available in Course Documents). As you read the paper, you should mark the paper according to the areas identified on the evaluation form. You should also mark strengths and weakness of the paper.
 - e. Complete the evaluation form electronically. Once you have saved it, you will submit it electronically via Assignments.
 - f. In addition to submitting the evaluation forms (which only I will see), you will also be discussing each student's paper via Blackboard discussion board forum (see #8 below). The intent of these discussions is to mimic a round-table discussion that would happen in a traditional setting. I will provide very clear video instructions as to the format of these particular discussions. The goal is for us to help each other grow as writers and thinkers, so the expectation is that our comments will be complimentary and constructive, not critical. I will monitor these boards carefully, and I will remove posts which are not constructive or complimentary.
8. In addition to completing evaluation forms for each paper submitted for the class, you will be assigned to give a video evaluation of one other student's paper. You must give a 5-10 minute oral critique (video recorded) of one Senior Paper from another member of the class. I will provide clear instructions on my expectations for this video oral critique. This video must be uploaded as an unlisted (not private) video to YouTube, and the link must be submitted to me via email by 11:59 p.m. on the date indicated on the Course Schedule. I will view the video, and if I believe the video to be appropriate, I will upload it to a discussion board for that particular paper. That oral critique will be the basis for a discussion about the paper being discussed, and all members of the class will be required to post comments (constructive and complementary) about the paper being discussed. After I view the oral critique video, if I believe it to be inappropriate (too harsh, too negative, not constructive enough, etc.), I will ask you to resubmit the oral critique. Then, I will upload the video to the appropriate discussion board. If you do not provide your video oral critique, your grade for the written critiques/video critique section of the course will be reduced by 50% (which is in essence a 5-point deduction of your overall course grade). In addition, the student whose paper you were to critique will miss out on an important component of the course—peer video feedback.

9. You must submit a reflection paper regarding your own Senior Seminar experience and Leavell College experience. The reflection paper must be 4-5 typed pages long and is due by 11:59 p.m. on the date indicated on the Course Schedule. The papers will be submitted electronically (via Assignments). **Late papers will not be accepted.**
10. A NOTE ABOUT PLAGIARISM: All written assignments must be your own work!
- If you use an author's exact words, you must put his/her words in quotation marks and footnote the source. You must also cite the author in the text of the paper.
 - If you paraphrase, you must footnote the source. You must also cite the author in the text of the paper.
 - Any information that you include in your paper that you did not previously know must be footnoted because that information came from someone else.
 - If you do not footnote someone else's information, you are plagiarizing that person's work.
 - If your paraphrases are too close to the original (i.e. you change an adjective here or there), you have committed inadvertent plagiarism. Inadvertent plagiarism is still plagiarism.
 - Plagiarism is a serious academic offense, and the penalties can include a failing grade in the course and/or dismissal from Leavell College.

Course Evaluation

The final grade will be determined in the following manner:

- 20%--Online Participation (primarily but not exclusively discussion boards)
- 50%--Senior Paper and Video Oral Defense
- 10%--Written Critiques of Senior Papers/Video Oral Critique of One Other Paper
- 10%--Article Critiques
- 10%--Reflection Paper

The grading scale as outlined in the Leavell College Catalog will be utilized:

A = 93-100; B = 85-92; C = 77-84; D = 70-76; F = 69 and below

Instructions for Mini-assignments Related to the Thesis Paper

Annotated Bibliography

For the first mini-assignment, you will submit an annotated bibliography. An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to the sources that you will use (or may use) in your final paper. Following each correctly formatted citation, you will provide a brief descriptive, evaluative paragraph known as an annotation. In other words, you will write several sentences about the source including its overall content and its possible usefulness in the paper. An example of an annotated bibliography entry is as follows:

Schultz, Thom, and Joani Schultz. *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church: And How to Fix It*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 1993.

The Schultzes argued that churches are not teaching their members to apply what they are learning from God's word. They suggested several strategies for getting learners to apply biblical truths. This book will be useful in the section of the paper advocating the use of Sunday school as a means of discipleship.

Note: Submission of less than 20 possible sources, poor Turabian format, missing annotations, or poor annotations will result in points being deducted from the final paper grade.

Thesis Statement

The second mini-assignment is your thesis statement. Because you are writing a thesis paper—a paper in which you attempt to defend or deny a thesis statement—a well-written thesis statement is a critical component of the paper. Your thesis statement must make a claim and should convey to the reader that the claim you are making has been researched thoroughly and is defensible by evidence. Your thesis cannot be an opinion but must indicate to the reader what your argument is and what claim you are making about that argument.

Detailed Outline

The final mini-assignment is your outline. The outline should include up to *five* first-level sections. The first section will be the introduction and the last section will be the conclusion, leaving you with two or three sections for the body of your paper. Under each section heading, you must include *at least* two subpoints. This outline will become the basis for the contents page in your paper. Note that because you will not submit rough drafts for your paper, the outline will be only chance for the professor to assess the logic of your paper. Students not submitting specific information in the outline will lose points off the final paper.

**Competency Assessment Rubric for
LSCM 4300: Senior Seminar**

Semester _____

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand the importance of critical thinking and the necessity of a synthesis of knowledge.
2. Demonstrate through discussion/communication and in written assignments the ability to integrate the various disciplines experiences throughout the Leavell College tenure.
3. Relate critical thinking and a synthesis of knowledge through the development and defense of the Senior Paper.

Assignment Description:

The student will research, write, and defend a Senior Paper.

Domain	Level	Failure (0 Pt)	Basic (1 Pt)	Competent (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
Understanding	Able to understand the importance of critical thinking and the necessity of a synthesis of knowledge.					
Application	Able to demonstrate the ability to integrate the various disciplines experienced throughout the Leavell College tenure.					
Communication	Able to relate critical thinking and a synthesis of knowledge.					