

Doctor of Ministry

Ministry Skills Major Focus

Study Guide

General Information

The courses, audio lectures, and Project assignments allow you to increase your knowledge in the subject matter of the courses and develop your creative writing skills in the Review and Response (reaction) Essays related to the textbooks. The courses have been designed to ensure that you achieve the learning outcomes you are expecting from your Doctor of Ministry degree program.

Audio Lectures

The audio lectures related to the Major Focus will enrich the courses and your learning experience. There are no Projects related to the audio lectures.

Course Projects Instructions

Beginning with the first course, read the required textbooks and complete the four Projects for each course in the Doctor of Ministry Major Focus. You may select textbooks from the *Additional Textbooks* list. Make notes as you read.

Project One

Create a two-level Annotated Outline for each of the two textbooks. A two-level outline consists of two Roman Numerals and two capital alpha letters for each Roman numeral.

The Two-Level Outline details what you consider to be the most important elements or sections in the textbook. It is possible that your Roman numerals will match the chapter numbers. In this instance, the A.; B.; C.; etc. will contain the key elements in the chapter.

If you choose to disregard the chapter numbers and use the Two-Level Outline for the entire book, it will not be unusual for a 600-page book to require Roman numerals I thru XX; in which case each Roman numeral will represent approximately thirty pages in the book. Thirty pages will usually require one alpha character for every 3-5 pages. With this average number, thirty pages will use alpha "A" thru alpha "F" for what you believe to be the six key elements.

Use the Annotated Outline method so that you can write complete thoughts and ideas for both the Roman numerals and the alpha characters. Some textbooks will be a bit more complicated than others. Please remember this. There is no minimum for word requirement. Be certain to demonstrate your familiarity with the contents of the book in your Two-Level Annotated Outline.

Example:

I.

A.

B.

II.

A.

B.

Use as many Roman Numerals and alpha letters as necessary for your Outline. The outline should be complete enough to use for teaching the course.

Project Two

Write a Review Essay for each book. Your Review Essays should be not less than 1,250 words. Use single spacing text. See Appendix I “How to Write a Review Essay” for instructions.

Project Three

Write a Response (Reaction) Essay for each book. Your Response Essays should be not less than 1,250 words. Use single spacing text. See Appendix II “How to Write a Response (Reaction) Essay” for instructions.

Project Four

Use at least 300 words to describe your learning experience in the course. Include how you will use what you have learned in your professional and/or personal life.

APPENDIX I

How to Write a Review Essay

When writing a review essay, your main objective is to provide an overview of the most significant points that were raised by the lecturer or author. A review essay is not the same as a summary paper. This is because a summary paper simply summarizes the material that is presented and provides a brief opinion on the contents. The review essay attempts to engage in a critical discussion of the materials presented as they relate to your prior studies, beliefs, and/or doctrinal position, depending upon the subject matter of the lecture or textbook.

When you write the review essays for the Projects, it is most effective to follow the same general pattern. First, write an introduction to the review essay. In this portion of the review essay, your goal is to identify what you believe is the main thesis the lecturer or author is presenting and to preview your own critical response. After the introduction, you will then write a brief summary of the contents.

The length of your summary should be 40% to 50% of the minimum words required for this Project. If you use more than 50% of your allotted words on retelling the contents, you are moving away from a review essay and entering into the lecture or textbook summary realm.

When summarizing the lecture or textbook, you should focus only on the central claims, arguments, and general positions presented. You should only discuss the information that is most significant and will help lead you into the critical discussion; this is the next portion of the review essay.

In the critical discussion portion of the review essay, you will evaluate the contribution the speaker or author has made to the discipline area presented. In order to complete this portion, you should ask yourself how the information advanced your knowledge. This requires you to identify the problems or controversies addressed by the speaker or author; assessing whether or not the presentations made a valuable contribution to the field; and whether or not the lecturer or author adequately and accurately presented the subject.

You will need evidence from the lectures or textbook to support your argument. Refer to the lectures or textbook throughout your review essay. Use direct quotes from the notes you made as you listened to the audio lectures or read the textbook.

Finally, your review essay will need a conclusion. In your conclusion, restate your thesis and summarize your critical analysis.

APPENDIX II

How to Write a Response (Reaction) Essay

A response (reaction) essay is generally meant to provide the reader with a better understanding of how you personally feel about the textbook or audio lecture subject. As such, when you write the response or reaction essay, you will discuss your personal thoughts and feelings on the subject. Biblical materials allow a broad range of expression.

A response or reaction essay is written in the first person. This means you will use the word “I” while writing the essay.

Because you are writing your personal response to the materials presented by the author or lecturer, your introductory paragraph will contain a thesis statement that asserts your point of view. The following portion of the essay will be used to support your thesis.

Your thesis statement should begin “I think that...” or “In my opinion...” or use something similar to these. You will use the same types of phrases throughout your response or reaction essay. Your essay will not rely on facts, because it focuses on your personal opinions, doctrinal position, or biblical interpretation.

However, you will use facts that you know, or your own observations, to help support your opinions. As you write, you may say “In my opinion, the lecture (or textbook) was very confusing because the speaker (or author) used too many words that were unfamiliar to me and changed the point of view too often.” Although another Institute student may not have a problem with the words, or keeping track of the changes in point of view, it is a fact that you did not know many of the words and the speaker did make frequent changes in his/her point of view.

After supporting your thesis statement with the body of your response or reaction essay, you will then write a conclusion. The conclusion is used to summarize what you have said and to once again state your thesis or opinions. Be sure to state your thesis in a different way than you stated it in the introduction. Redundancy is a sign of poor writing and unacceptable at the Graduate and Post-Graduate levels.