**Mountain Theological Seminary**

**Graduate Course Syllabus**

**Marriage and Family Counseling**

**Course # PC603**

Sept 14 – Dec 6 Dr. Jennifer Konzen

MTS Office Hrs: By appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course involves a study of the dynamics within marriage and family and the proper application of biblical and psychological counseling principles with respect to marriage and family.

**COURSE RATIONALE**

This course analyzes the dynamic processes within the range of experiences in couple and family relationships in various areas from spiritual and systemic perspectives: from physical affection to abuse, healthy communication to painful conflict, connection to disconnection, and the impact of roles and power. Special focus is given to physical and sexual abuse, addiction, domestic violence, mental health, and resilience. Systemic and biblical approaches to family and couple’s functioning will be used. Students will also examine the *Self of the Counselor* in relation to work with family and couple issues, which involves encouraging you to examine your attitudes, beliefs, experiences, and understandings about individuals and relationships within family and marriage.

**MTS MISSION**

The mission of Mountain Theological Seminary is to equip followers of Jesus around the world to be spiritual leaders and servants in Christ's church by providing them with a transformative biblical distance education.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

As a result of this course, students should accomplish the following objectives:

1. Recall laws and ethical guidelines in the therapy involved in the treatment of marriage and family problems.
2. Identify and analyze marriage and family relationships using methods from a biblical and systemic theoretical perspective including appropriate knowledge of the research in marriage and therapies.
3. Analyze the interaction of spirituality, theology, and marriage, family, and societal dynamics as organizing influences within the family and integrate a biblical theology about marriage and family into their own lives and counseling practices.
4. Achieve a basic understanding of marital and family systems and understand and describe approaches and techniques for assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of the relevant disorders and/or associated treatment conditions described in the DSM-5.
5. Develop therapeutic skills in the area of marital and family history taking, treatment planning, and the ability to recognize when psychological, sociocultural, spiritual, or familial factors may be influencing individual, couple, and familial relational health including physical or mental health problems, substance use, and violence, abuse, and trauma.
6. Understand the impact of culture, race, ethnicity and other diversity factors on marital and familial perceptions, attitudes, actions, and relationships.

### **COURSE TEXTBOOKS**

American Psychiatric Association. (2014). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Yarhouse M., & Sells, J. (2017). *Family therapies: A comprehensive Christian appraisal*, 2nd Ed. ISBN-13: 978-0830828548

Lebow, J. & Snyder, D. (2023). *Clinical handbook of couple therapy*, 6th edition.

Hendrix, H., & Hunt, H. (2014). *Making marriage simple*. ISBN-13: 978-0770437145

Konzen, T., & Konzen, J. (2016). *The art of intimate marriage: A Christian couples guide to sexual intimacy*. San Diego, CA: Konzen Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-0770437145 or ISBN-13: 978-0692730706

**FORMATTING**

For writing papers, please use ***Author-Date***Turabian style format. Students have the option of using APA format if they choose.

APA:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\_and\_citation/apa\_style/apa\_formatting\_and\_style\_guide/general\_format.html

Turabian:

<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html>

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING RUBRICS**

**\*All assignments are due on Sundays at 11:55pm**

1. **Participation: Module Posts(150 points total: 15 pts possible per module**)*.* Students will engage in a minimum of 3 posts for the modules posted (modules 1-8 and 10-11). Students must post at least 1 original post and 2 replies to other posts (minimum 30 total posts between 10 modules). Posts must be substantive in content (at least 400 words total **between** **the 3 posts** for each module), and content of the posts are to contain references to the material covered in both the posted lecture and the readings for that module that relate to the lecture. Responses, however, are **not a summary** of a reading (see reflection papers below), but rather an integration of the readings, lecture, and personal perspectives. Students are encouraged to share perspectives, ask questions posed to the instructor or fellow students, and engage in questions and perspectives from other student’s posts.

**Grading Rubric for Assignment 1**

* A – 135-150 points. The student writes substantive posts that show a concise, yet knowledgeable understanding of other students posts and the readings/lecture. The student shows an understanding and integration of the underlying concepts in the posts/readings. The student shows a personal perspective on the posts/readings. The student references other student’s posts and the readings at least once. The posts are very well written.
* B – 120-134 points. The student writes posts that show a concise, yet knowledgeable understanding of other student posts and the readings/lecture. The student shows a rudimentary understanding of the underlying concepts in the posts/readings, but makes a few errors in understanding. The student shows a personal perspective on the material. The student references the posts/readings at least once. The posts are well written.
* C – 105-119 points. The student writes posts that show an uncertain knowledge of other student posts/readings and lecture. The student makes several errors in understanding. The student either only discusses the posts/readings or a personal perspective, or minimally integrates both. The posts are not well written.
* F – 90 points or less. The student writes posts that show minimal knowledge of other student posts/readings and lecture. The student makes several errors in understanding. The student shows an inadequate understanding of the material. Student writes only minimal personal perspective of the posts/readings. The posts are poorly written.

2. **Summary and Reflection Papers**(1-page, single-spaced papers, 15 pts./each; 10 papers total/**150 points** **total**): For each of the modules specified (modules 1-5, 7-11), students will write a one-page, **single-spaced** summary and reflection paper exploring their response to a journal article or one chapter of their choice from the reading for that module. The response includes a summary of the article/chapter, and a personal reflection on the reading. The paper needs to include references to the chapter/journal article using the student’s own words. The article/chapter reference is to be placed at the top of the paper. The paper can include citations of other articles/books. The paper should be in ***Author-Date*** Turabian format (with the exception of single spaced) according to the example given by the instructor. Students may use APA formatting if they choose. If article reference (reference formatting, not footnote formatting) at the top of the paper is incorrect, two points are automatically deducted.

**Grading Rubric for Assignment 2**

* A – 13.5-15 points per paper. The student writes a paper of at least 1 page that shows a concise, yet knowledgeable understanding of the readings. The student shows an understanding of the underlying concepts in the readings. The student does a short summary of the material, and then shows a personal perspective on the readings. The student references the readings at least once. The paper is very well written.
* B – 12-13.4 points per paper. The student writes a paper of at least 1 page that shows a concise, yet knowledgeable understanding of the readings. The student shows a rudimentary understanding of the underlying concepts in the readings, but makes a few errors in understanding. The student summarizes the readings, but does not include a quality personal perspective on the material or the student writes a personal perspective but does not include a quality summary. The student references the readings at least once. The paper is well written.
* C – 10.5-11.9 points per paper. The student writes a paper less than 1 page or less that shows an uncertain knowledge of the readings. The student makes several errors in understanding. The student either only discusses the readings or a personal perspective, or minimally integrates both. The paper is not well written.
* F – 9 points per paper or less. The student writes a paper of less than 1 page that shows minimal knowledge of the readings. The student makes several errors in understanding. The student shows an inadequate summary of the theory or writes only minimal personal perspective of the readings. The paper is poorly written.

3. **Genogram(200 points):** Students will create a Family Genogram using the “Constructing Genograms” article found on Moodle. Students will interview family members using the questions from the chapter/article to create a 3-generation genogram with a legend (see example for what can be included in a legend). Genogram can be done in any format (electronic, drawn, etc). Students will write a 1-page summary of what they learned. Formatting for the summary does **not** require Turabian formatting. Students can use the formatting that will best describe what they learned about their family of origin in regard to patterns in family dynamics. Formatting can include paragraphs or bullets points, etc.

**Grading Rubric for Assignment 3**

* A – 180-200 points. The student writes a paper of at least 1 page that shows a concise, yet knowledgeable understanding of the project and readings. The student creates a clear and detailed 3-generation genogram with accompanying legend to explain the genogram. The student shows an understanding of the underlying concepts in the readings and interviews. The student shows a personal perspective on the readings and interviews. The student references the readings at least once. The paper is very well written.
* B – 160-179 points. The student writes a paper of at least 1 page that shows a concise, yet knowledgeable understanding of the project and readings. The student creates a rudimentary genogram with a basic legend to detail the genogram but makes a few errors in understanding. The student includes a moderate personal perspective on the material. The student references the readings at least once. The paper is well written.
* C – 140-159 points. The student writes a paper less than 1 page or less that shows an uncertain knowledge of the project and readings. The student creates a minimal genogram without a legend to detail the genogram and makes several errors in understanding. The student either only minimally discusses the readings or only includes a minimal personal perspective, or minimally integrates both. The paper is not well written.
* F –120 points or less. The student writes a paper of less than 1 page that shows almost no knowledge of the project or the readings. The student makes many errors in understanding. The student shows an inadequate understanding of the project/readings. Student writes almost no personal perspective of the project/readings. The paper is poorly written.

**4. PowerPoint Presentations and Posts(250 points** for presentation [**190 pts**] and posts [**12 posts; 5 pts each for 60 pts total]**): At the beginning of the semester, students will choose a marriage and family topic covered in the course (see list below). Students will communicate to the professor their choice of topic by the Sunday of Module 2. To ensure a variety of presentations topics to be viewed, no more than two students may present on one particular topic. Students will create a PowerPoint presentation (see guidelines below), record a narration along with the presentation, and post the narrated presentation. The presentation will last no longer than 15 minutes. The presentation requires a minimum of at least 6 sources (6 additional sources outside of class textbooks and articles). Use only peer-reviewed articles or academic books. The presentation must include the sections detailed below.

Presentations will be posted for viewing by the Sunday of Module 8. By the Sunday of Module 9, students will have watched 6 different posted student presentations. Students will have engaged in at least 1 original comment on each of those 6 presentations as well as engaged in 1 response to another student’s post on the same presentation (2 posts on 6 presentations for a total of 12 posts; 5 pts each). Posts must be substantive (comparable to a 4-sentence paragraph).

Review of requirements for presentation:

1) 15 min presentation with narration posted by the Sunday of Module 8.

2) 2 posts on 6 presentations by the Sunday of Module 9 (1 original, 1 reply per presentation – 12 posts total).

**Presentations must include the following:**

1. Description of the issue (use pictures and diagrams)
2. History of treatment for the issue
3. Systemic perspective (views, impact, and influence of/from systemic context of societal, cultural, spiritual, familial, and marital systems)
4. Current practices (treatment protocols in counseling and psychological fields)

Topics may include the following (ask instructor if you have additional topics you want to pursue):

* Spirituality and religion in marriage and family
* Culture and families
* Culture and marriage
* Mental health challenges in families
* Mental health challenges in marital relationships
* Sexuality in families (not exclusively sexual abuse; see below)
* Sexual Abuse in families
* Substance abuse in the family
* Substance abuse in the marriage
* High conflict families
* Physical abuse in families
* Interpersonal violence in marriage (IPV)
* Sexual violations in marital sexuality
* Societal crisis and trauma and the family (i.e., immigration, war, natural disasters, societal violence)
* Sexual and emotional affairs and the impact on marriage and family
* The impact of relational trauma in marriage and family (divorce, separation, remarriage)

**5. Final Paper (250 points)**: Students will choose a specific challenge that couples and families encounter from the list above. Students will write a 15-page paper (15 pages of content, not including Title Page, Abstract or Reference page) including a personal and theological exploration, a brief literature review of the chosen issues, and a step-by-step treatment plan. The paper requires a minimum of at least 6 sources (6 additional sources outside of class textbooks and articles). These 6 sources can be the same sources from the students presentation. Use only academic journals and academic books. Do not cite general websites, such as *Wikipedia* or other dictionary/encyclopedia type websites. The paper should be in ***Author/Date*** Turabian format and must include title page, abstract, and reference page (students have the option of using APA format if they choose).

The paper will include the following sections:

* Title Page
* Introduction
* Personal exploration of values, beliefs, and comfortability around family and marriage issues, including experiences, problems, and disorders.
  + An integration of theology and personal values and beliefs in regard to marriage and family
  + How this exploration influences your view of the chosen topic in family and marriage
* Literature Review:
  + Explication of chosen topic (incl. applicable DSM 5 diagnostic criteria, and applicable psychological and sociocultural factors)
  + Historical perspective specific to the topic and to the field of family and marital therapy
    - Historical research and counseling on the chosen topic
    - Current perspectives on counseling and interventions for the chosen topic
  + Systemic perspective
    - Familial, cultural, societal, spiritual, and psychological influences on the chosen topic
* Your Counseling Plan (incl. counseling goals and interventions)
  + Research Base for treatment protocol and interventions
  + Step-by-Step (early, middle, and late phases of counseling)
  + Specific Interventions
* Conclusion
* Reference Page

**Grading Rubric for Assignments 4/5**

* A (225-250pts) - The paper or presentation is exceptional in connecting the issues to the interventions. It clearly makes a creative contribution to the field of counseling. The paper follows Turabian or APA style with a reference list that shows an extensive reading of counseling approaches and related interventions. The paper is very well written.
* B (200-224pts) – The paper or presentation makes some connections between the issues and the interventions. The contribution to the field is moderate. The paper follows Turabian or APA style (with some errors) with a reference list that shows an extensive reading of the treatment problem and the underlying issues used in the treatment model. The paper shows some inconsistencies and incomplete knowledge of counseling approaches and intervention. The paper is generally well written.
* C (175-199pts) – The paper or presentation includes explication of the issues and interventions but does not make clear connections between ideas. The main ideas are not original or mostly repeat what was read for class. The reference list is minimal. APA (6th ed.) formatting is marginal; errors are frequent. The paper is not well written.
* F – 174 points or less - The paper or presentation is unacceptable in quality and analysis of ideas. Instructions are not followed, the paper is short and not well thought-out.

**USDE REQUIREMENTS**

The United States Department of Education (USDE) requires a minimum of 13 hours of work for *any* 3-hour course, regardless of how long the course lasts. It does not have to be the *same work* as a traditional 15-week course, but it must be the *same amount* of work. To meet this USDE requirement, ***all MTS instructors must list in their syllabi the amount of time that each assignment might take. The total hours for all work in a 3-hour class must equal at least 135 hours, including any in-class time.***  Use the following formula for reading and writing workloads: an average adult student takes 1 hour to read and absorb 20 pages of graduate-level text and 1.5 hours to research and write and rewrite 1 page of graduate-level text. Our reading and writing guidelines require about 1,000 pages of reading per course and up to 50 pages of writing per course (including any online posts). Using the formula above, reading 1,000 pages should take about 50 hours and writing 50 pages should take about 75 hours. That is a total of 125 hours, not including any in-class time for any onsite or offsite courses.

45 hours in class + (X pages /20) hours of reading + (Y pages of writing x 1.5) hours of writing >= 125 hours. Note that the total number of hours in a course may be more than 125, but it cannot be less.

1 hour in the classroom = 1 hour of course work

20 pages of reading = 1 hour of course work

1 page (300 words) of research and writing = 1.5 hours of course work

1 hour of field research = 1 hour of course work

1 page of online posting (200+ words) = 1 hour of course work.

**COURSE GRADING**

Below is the MTS grading scale for this class:

A Excellent 94–100 4.00

A- 90–93 3.67

B+ 87–89 3.33

B Good 83-86 3.00

B- 80-82 2.67

C+ 77-79 2.33

C Average 73-76 2.00

C- 70-72 1.67

D+ 67-69 1.33

D Passing 63-66 1.00

D- 60-62 0.67

F\* Failing 0–59 0.00

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS/DUE DATES**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignments** | **Points** | **Due Date** |
| 1. Participation: Module posts (10) | 150 points total | Each Sunday |
| 1. Reflection Papers (10) | 150 points total | Most Sundays |
| 1. Genogram | 200 points | Sunday Module 6 |
| 1. Presentation and Presentation posts | 250 points | Module 8 and Module 9 |
| 1. Final Paper | 250 points | Sunday of Module 12 |
| TOTAL: | 1000 points |  |

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary Course Schedule for PC603**  **Marriage and Family Counseling** | | | | | | |
| **Module/Week** | **Session Topic** | **Reading/**  **Viewing** | **Required**  **Reading** | **Module**  **Workload** | **Written**  **Assignments** | **Points** |
| **1** | Biblical Approach to Marriage and Family Counseling and Exploration of the Self-of-Therapist | 80 pages  1 video  Read discussion posts | Yarhouse 1 & 12  Articles: Walsh, F. (2010)  Yusof & Carpenter (2015) | 8 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  **13 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper** | 15 points  15 points |
| **2** | History and Theoretical Approaches in Marriage and Family Counseling | 180 pages  1 video  Read discussion posts | Lebow 1, 13  Yarhouse 2, 3, 8 | 9 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  **14 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper** | 15 points  15 points |
| **3** | Multicultural Marriage and Family Counseling | 70 pages  1 video  Read discussion posts | Lebow 12  Yarhouse 18  Article:  Bornstein & Lansford (2019)  Articles: choose 2  Gonzalez & Mendez-Pounds (2019)  Boyd-Franklin , Kelly, & Durham (2008)  Ham (2003) | 9 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  **14 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper** | 15 points  15 points |
| **4** | Crisis and Trauma and the impact on family and marriage | 65 pages  1 video  Read discussion posts | Yarhouse 13  Articles:  Catani, Schaer & Neuner (2008)  Walsh (2007)  Rowe & Liddle (2019) | 9 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  **14 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper** | 15 points  15 points |
| **5** | Physical and Sexual Abuse in families | 50 pages  2 videos (lecture and ACES video)  Read discussion posts | Articles:  Whitaker & Rogers-Brown (2019)  Baumrind (2001)  Collin-Vezina et al. (2015)  Domhard et al. (2014) | 8 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  **13 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper** | 15 points  15 points (10/24) |
| **6** | Mental Health in the Family and Marriage | 100 pages  2 videos  Read discussion posts | Lebow Chap 24, 25, 26  Yarhouse 16  Articles:  Patterson, Edwards, & Vakil (2018) | 8 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  3 hours field work  **16 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Genogram** | 15 points (10/31)  **200 points** |
| **7** | Domestic Violence, Marital Conflict and Addiction in the Family and Marriage | 120 pages  1 video  Read discussion posts | Lebow Chap 17  Yarhouse Chap 14, 17  Article (choose 2):  Stith & McCollum (2011)  Fletcher (2013)  Rowe & Jouriles (2019) | 9 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  **14 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper** | 15 points  15 points |
| **8** | Relational Trauma in the Family: Affairs, Divorce, Separation, and Remarriage | 100 pages  1 video  Read discussion posts  Articles for presentation | Lebow Chap 18, 21, 22  Yarhouse Chap 15  Article:  Greenberg et al. (2010)  Chapter:  Ransomed Journey: The State of the Union  Recommended: Lebow Chap 22 | 9 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  5 hours field work  **19 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper**  **Presentations Due and Uploaded** | 15 points  15 points  **190 pts** |
| **9** | Treatment Part 1: Assessment, Counseling, and Interventions for Families | 60 pages  1 video  Student videos  Read discussion posts | Lebow Chap 2  Artlcles:  Steinglass, Sanders, & Wells (2019)  Timmer et al. (2006)  Louis (2019)  Bermudez (2008) | 8 hours reading  4 hours viewing  5 hours writing  **12 hours work** | **Reflection paper**  **Presentation Posts Due**: 6 Discussion posts/6 replies to posts (1600 words total) | 15 points  **60 pts.** |
| **10** | Counseling and Interventions for Couple and Family: Part 2 | 100 pages  1 video  Read discussion posts  Articles for final paper (app. 60 pgs) | Lebow Chap 5, 11, 16  Chapters:  Konzen 3,4,5  Hendrix & Hunt (any 4 chapters)  (Recommended: Lebow Chap 10, 20, 28, 29) | 9 hours reading  2 hours viewing  3 hours writing  **12 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper**  Writing for final paper | 15 points  15 points |
| **11** | Fostering Health and Resilience in Marriage and Family | 40 pages  1 video  Read discussion posts  Articles for final paper (app. 60 pgs) | Yarhouse 21  Articles:  Ember-Black (2019)  Wolin & Wolin (1992) | 8 hours reading  2 hours viewing  7 hours writing  **17 hours work** | Discussion post (1) and Response posts (2) (400 words total)  **Reflection paper**  Writing for final paper | 15 points  15 points |
| **12** | Research, Ethics, and Laws in Marriage and Family Counseling | 28 pages  1 video | Lebow: Chap 31  Articles:  Barnett & Jacobsen (2019)  Fincham & Beach (2010) | 4 hours reading  2 hours viewing  10 hours writing  **16 hours work**  **Total Course Hours = 174 hrs** | Final non-graded student post  **Final Paper** | **250 pts** |

**POLICIES**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Students are expected to attend every class session. In the event that a student misses

one class session, he/she must work with the instructor to determine what is needed to make

up what was missed. If the student does not make up the work in a satisfactory manner, the

student’s final grade will be lowered one letter grade at the end of the course. If the student

misses two class sessions, the student’s final grade will be lowered one letter grade provided

that he/she makes up work for both class sessions. If that make up work is not completed, then

the final grade will be lowered by two letter grades. If the student misses three class sessions,

he/she will be given an F for his/her final grade and not be allowed to finish the course.

At times students have legitimate extenuating circumstances for their absences from

class. If this occurs and the student is doing well in class up to that point, the student can

contact the professor of the class and the Director of MTS and ask for a 30-day extension

beyond the end of class to complete the work in the class. This request however must be made

at least 2 weeks before the final class session. If a 30 day extension is approved beyond the end

of class and the student fails to finish all the requirements of the class by the end of those 30

days, the student will be assigned an F for his/her final grade for that class. Appeals can be made to the MTS Director.

**LATE WORK POLICY**

All work is due when listed in the course syllabus, unless otherwise stipulated by the instructor. No work may be accepted later than one week after the course concludes, since ***final grades for all classes are due two weeks after the last class session***. The only exception to this policy is for students who request and are granted an official course extension as noted in the above paragraph. All such extensions are granted only for extreme circumstances (extended illness, death in family, etc.), and the extension may not exceed 30 days from the last day of class. Only the MTS Director may grant such requests, which must be made in writing at least 2 weeks before the last class session. Otherwise, the grade earned at the end of the class is the one granted.

Any paper or project that is submitted after the due date/time receives an automatic 10% reduction in points each day it is overdue. For instance, if a paper is due Sunday at 11:55pm, if the paper is turned in anytime on Monday, it receives a 10% reduction in points.

**ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP INTEGRITY POLICY**

It is the policy of MTS that its students and faculty exhibit a high standard of honesty

and integrity and a commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Students are expected to be

committed to a living standard depicted in the Bible both academically and relationally both

inside and outside of school. Incidents of lack of integrity, including such things as plagiarism,

cheating, treating others with lack of respect will be taken seriously and offenders held

accountable up to and including probation, suspension and/or removal from their academic

program and MTS. All infractions should be reported to the Director of MTS.

**INSTRUCTOR/STUDENT COVENANT**

As instructor of this course, I covenant with each student that I will model Christ-like behavior, value and respect each student as a fellow disciple/learner, be prepared for each class session, make appropriate assignments, grade all assignments fairly, return all graded assignments promptly, and be available for consultation outside of class. In return, I expect each student to model Christ-like behavior, value and respect fellow students and me as the instructor, be prepared for each class session, and complete assignments in ways that demonstrate your integrity.

**ONLINE ETIQUETTE**

Most of the online or hybrid courses in the graduate programs require students to interact with each other and with the instructor on a regular basis (per syllabus instructions). Most of that interaction is done through online comments posted on Blackboard. Due to the constraints and unique nature of online communication, students should be aware of the tone of any comments they post. Comments can often be misinterpreted when non-verbal cues such as facial expression and voice intonation are not present. Excessive punctuation, such as repeated exclamation points or writing in ALL CAPS, could be construed as overly emotional or angry. Students need to consider how remarks might be interpreted by someone who does not know them personally and can only take their words at face value. Students should compose their comments per instructions under the syllabus assignments, paying careful attention to proper grammar and spelling. Students should also consider how to phrase any differences in thought, opinion, view, or belief in a way that is honest but is not disparaging or demeaning to a fellow student or in a way that is so strong as to stifle a differing view.

**LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

Please see the Learning Hub on Canvas for the online library link. If you are a student in the Denver area, there are theological libraries which are available in the area for students to use with permission. These include:

The Denver Seminary Library

6399 South Santa Fe Drive

Littleton, Colorado 80120

Colorado Christian University

8787 W. Alameda Ave.

Lakewood, CO 80226

Iliff School of Theology

2323 E. Iliff Ave.

Denver, CO 80021

There are also several State University libraries in the area which can be visited for research including the University of Colorado in Boulder, Regis University, University of Colorado in Colorado Springs, Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Naropa University in Boulder. The best search engine for biblical article research is EBSCO ATLA Religion with Serials data base which can be found at all of the above libraries.

Please also visit any theological or university library in your area to see if they have access to ATLAs Religion data base. In Colorado, you may also check with local libraries for the availability of EBSCO *Academic Search Premier* data base. It searches many well respected academic religious journals also. MTS students can also access *Academic Search Premier* through our MTS website at <https://www.mtsem.org/about-mts>.