



THE QUILL: Improving Student Academic Writing
Quality Enhancement Plan of Asbury Theological Seminary
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Executive Summary

When ATS was founded in 1923, there were few services in the broader academic world for improving theological writing. Almost a century later, a plethora of writing services are now found throughout higher education. What has not changed is the mission of Asbury Theological Seminary, which is “a community called to prepare theologically educated, sanctified, Spirit-filled men and women to evangelize and to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world through the love of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit and to the glory of God the Father.” In order for graduates of Asbury to fulfill this mission, they must have substantial abilities in the form of written communication. Therefore Asbury Theological Seminary has developed a systematic plan to integrate theological writing skills development into all of the Seminary’s Masters of Arts degree programs and the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program. At its heart, the Quality Enhancement Plan has six program initiatives:

1. The Writing Center for students (a) includes face-to-face writing consultation and distance component for writing consultation and (b) exhibits both a physical presence on the Kentucky campus and a distinctive web presence on the institution’s website.
2. Writing Center consultation requirements are attached to two current strategic courses.
3. Student attendance at Writing Workshops sponsored by the Writing Center.
4. The establishment of a course to enhance graduate level theological writing for degree seeking students called Theological Research and Writing. This course is required for those who do not meet writing standards and is open to all students to enroll.
5. An assessment process for determining the level of students’ writing abilities for graduate education that will determine if a student should be placed in the writing course Theological Research and Writing.
6. Specialized Faculty Development Training on how to enhance graduate level academic writing for students.

There are five categories of writing features with five Capstone outcomes that will be used as the Student Learning Outcomes. Students of the Asbury Theological Seminary will be able, at an accomplished level, to demonstrate competencies relative to the following:

1. **Context of and Purpose for Writing:** Demonstrate a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.
2. **Content Development:** Use appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer’s understanding, and shaping the whole work.
3. **Genre and Disciplinary Conventions:** Demonstrate detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices.
4. **Sources and Evidence:** Demonstrate skillful use of high quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and the genre of the writing.
5. **Control of Syntax and Mechanics:** Use graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to the readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.