

The South African Theological Seminary

# Counselling Courses Tutorial on Academic Writing

## General Rules of Scientific Writing

Paraklesis Christian Counselling Course

**Dr Mervin van der Spuy**

Tutorial for student-counsellors

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# Table of Contents

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1. <a href="#"><u>Introduction</u></a>	p 3
2. <a href="#"><u>General Guidelines for Assignment Papers</u></a>	p 3
3. <a href="#"><u>APA In-Text Citations</u></a>	p 5
4. <a href="#"><u>The General Rules of Scientific Writing</u></a>	p 8
5. <a href="#"><u>Assessment Rubric for Counselling Courses</u></a>	p16
6. <a href="#"><u>Additional Reading and Resources</u></a>	p20
7. <a href="#"><u>Assignment Template Example</u></a>	p23



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# Introduction

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*Academic or scientific writing is different from everyday, conversational speech and informal writing (such as writing in your diary, writing a letter to someone, posting a reflection in the discussion forum, or sending an Email). **It is a form of technical writing, with its own specific vocabulary and specific set of rules.***

*In the counselling courses you are required to write assignments that meet the criteria for academic writing.*

*This Tutorial on Academic Writing is to help you to achieve that goal. It will inform you as to what the facilitator and/or assessor will be looking for when they grade your assignments. It will provide you with the necessary knowledge and suggest additional sources you can explore.*

*Please carefully read through the tutorial and keep it handy when you are writing your assignment.*

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## General Guidelines for Counselling Assignments

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 **Counselling students must review the first six chapters of Dr Kevin Smith's book**

- [Academic Writing and Theological Research](#) (by Dr Kevin Smith)

 **An Example Assignment Template is available in #7.**

- [Assignment Template](#)

- Write assignments in your **own words** (take note of SATS policy on plagiarism), utilizing a formal **academic writing style**, and appropriately supporting your arguments by **citing** your sources.
- Please review and study the [General Rules of Scientific Writing](#)
- Include a bibliography, and correctly use the **APA In-Text Style** of Citation for all counselling courses - [APA Citation Examples in #3](#)
- Study the counselling assignments rubrics that will be used for assessment and grading.  
- [Assessment Rubrics for Counselling Courses](#)

- Your counselling courses assignment must show that you understand the subject matter, that you are able to make a bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment (the approach used in all the counselling courses), and that you can critically discuss the different concepts and constructs from an integrated theological and psychological perspective.
- You can express your opinion, but it must be based on critical evaluation of assigned and additional credible sources. Further to this, the student must demonstrate the capacity to integrate theology and psychology while articulating the impact of the material upon their personal worldview. Assignments must convey the student's ability to apply theory to praxis, personally and professionally (personalization is important in counsellor training).
- **Your assignment in general should include:**
  - A short introduction to the assignment topic and a short indication of why you choose to discuss selected constructs and concepts, and how you are planning to structure your discussion.
  - A summation/overview of the main topic/theory and a breakdown of it into the constructs and concepts that you chose to discuss.
  - A critical evaluation of those topics from a Christian counselling perspective from an integrative theology/psychology perspective – demonstrating personalization.
  - A conclusion about the appropriate application or use of these approaches in Christian counselling.
  - Concluding with comments/suggestions concerning the use of these theories/concepts/constructs for Christian counsellors.

***Clearly there is no one model that will fit all assignments, but the general layout should be considered and adapted for each assignment topic.***

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## SATS INFORMATION KIOSK

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- Please review the documents on the [SATS INFORMATION KIOSK](#):
  - [Plagiarism: What is it, and how to avoid it](#)
  - [A Students A-Z of Theology](#)
  - [Understanding dual logins for EbscoHost](#)
  - [Ebsco Tutorial Videos](#)
  - [Common Course Guide](#)

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# APA In-Text Citations

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The essentials of how to cite sources are explained in **Chapter 3** of Dr Kevin Smith's book, [Academic Writing and Theological Research: A Guide for Students](#) (Smith 2008). Please review this chapter carefully - You should study it together with its companion chapter four about how to compile a bibliography.

**In all the counselling courses we use the APA Citation Style.** The reason for selecting this specific style is because that is the style that you will encounter in the counselling-psychology books and articles that you read.

[APA Link where you can find all the APA Format Pages](#)

## Referencing

- Referencing allows you to recognize and acknowledge the contribution of other writers and researchers
- Any academic paper that used the ideas, words or research of other writers, must contain citations.
- It is a means of giving credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas.
- By citing the work of a writer or scholar, you acknowledge and respect the intellectual property rights of that researcher.
- In academic writing you can use the words and ideas of other researchers, prominent experts in their field, if you acknowledge that you have done so by citing them.
- Referencing is a way to provide evidence to support the statements and claims in your own assignments. Citations make your writing (and conclusions) more persuasive.
- By citing experts in your writing, you are demonstrating that you are knowledgeable and aware of the reputable researchers in your field of study.
- References must be accurate enough so that any reader will be able to trace the sources of information you have used.
- Tip: *While reading and researching, keep a file with the quotes and summaries and the citation and page number. Nothing is more frustrating than wanting to use something from your notes or a quote, and you cannot remember the source you got it from.*

Citations are not used only used to avoid plagiarism; they clearly have an important role.

Read the full article at [Why is Referencing Important?](#) Also read the article *Why Do We Cite and Reference?* at [Academic Referencing](#).

# Resources

Because the counselling courses program integrates Theology and Psychology, we use the **APA (American Psychological Association) Citation Style**. A Google search on “In Text citations using the APA Citation Style” will overwhelm you with more than a million hits, but you can browse through the first few pages and find what you are looking for, or make your search more specific. Here are a few sources you can use:

- Victoria University (Australia) provides a whole section “[APA Referencing: Home](#)” under Library Guides. In the left column there is an ‘About this guide’ with links to most of what you will need. The top menu helps you get started, provides examples, etc. There is even a quiz to take to test yourself.
- The Purdue Online Writing Lab has a wealth of information. Scan through all the topics listed in the left banner, Purdue Owl. [Purdue OWL: APA Formatting and Style Guide](#)
- The [APA Quick Citation Guide](#) off Penn State University is also a useful resource.
- [APA Link where you can find all the APA Format Pages](#)

## Examples

### **Please Note:**

*It the responsibility of the student-counsellor to research and find the correct APA citation style for each occasion, source, textbook, article, seminar, or lecture. These examples are not sufficient or comprehensive enough!*

### **A basic reference list entry for a book (print version) in APA must include:**

- Author or authors. The surname is followed by first initials.
- Year of publication of the book (in round brackets).
- Book title (in italics).
- Edition (in round brackets), if other than first.
- Place of publication.
- Publisher.
- The first line of each citation is left adjusted. Every subsequent line is indented 5-7 spaces.

### **Example (Book):**

Arnott, G. D. (2017). *The disability support worker* (2nd ed.). South Yarra, VIC: Cengage Learning.

### **Example (eBook):**

Lecomte-Tilouine, M. (2017). *Nature, culture and religion at the crossroads of Asia*. London: Routledge.  
Retrieved from <https://www.routledge.com/>

### **Example (Kindle):**

Gladwell, M. (2008). *Outliers: The story of success* [Kindle DX version]. Retrieved from Amazon.com

## The basics of a reference list entry for a Web page or Web document:

- Author or authors. The surname is followed by first initials.
- Year (in round brackets).
- Title.
- Web address.
- The first line of each citation is left adjusted. Every subsequent line is indented 5-7 spaces.

### Example:

American Psychological Association. (2018). What you need to know about willpower: The psychological science of self-control. Retrieved from [www.apa.org/helpcenter/willpower.aspx](http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/willpower.aspx)

## The basics of a reference list entry for course or lecture notes (APA Lecture Citation):

- Author surname followed by initials (if stated).
- Year (in round brackets).
- Title including Unit Code, Unit name and Week (and Session, if relevant) (in italics).
- Description of medium [in square brackets].
- Web address.
- The first line of each citation is left adjusted. Every subsequent line is indented 5-7 spaces.

### Example:

Ooi, D. (2018). AEB1804: *Young People in a Global Community, week 1, session 1 notes* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from <https://vucollaborate.vu.edu.au/d2l/le/content/177492/viewContent/2217850/View>

### Example:

Van der Spuy, M.A. (2015). *The Ageing Population, CCC2124 Gerontology, Lecture 2-1*. [Articulate Slide Show]. Retrieved from <https://my.sats.edu.za>

## The basics of a reference list entry for a Web page or Web document:

- Author or authors. The surname is followed by first initials.
- Year (in round brackets).
- Title.
- Web address.
- The first line of each citation is left adjusted. Every subsequent line is indented 5-7 spaces.

### Example:

American Psychological Association. (2018). What you need to know about willpower: The psychological science of self-control. Retrieved from [www.apa.org/helpcenter/willpower.aspx](http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/willpower.aspx)

### Example:

Bernstein, M. (2002). Ten tips on writing the living Web. A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites, 149. Retrieved from <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>

## APA Bible Citation

- The bible is classified as a classical work - for classical works, the APA requires no citation in the reference list (bibliography); hence the bible **is only cited** in the in-text citation with the following elements: *book chapter, verse, and translation* - [APA Bible Citation](#)
- When **citing** a passage of scripture, include the abbreviated name of the book, the chapter number, and the verse number—never a page number. Chapter and verse are separated by a colon. No punctuation mark is necessary between the verse and translation. The name of the book may be abbreviated in the in-text citations.
- In the subsequent citations, there is no need to indicate the version unless you use a different one.

### Example:

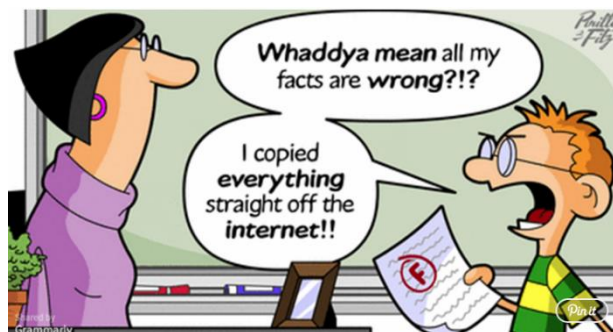
*"Verse ... quotation ..."* (Genesis 3:6 King James Version).

### Example:

In 1 Kings 3:6 (King James Version), Solomon said...

## Take Note:

- Do **not** include the long URL from a SATS course webpage as it can only be retrieved through a password protected portal such as Canvas while being registered in the online course. Just use, Retrieved from <https://my.sats.edu.za/>
- **Never** include URL's in the text of your assignment
- If you are citing from more than one lecture in 2015, indicate by adding a, b, c, etc. For Example (Van der Spuy, 2015a and Van der Spuy, 2015b) etc.
- Be consistent throughout your assignment - use the APA Style of citations and do so consistently.
- **Writing in your own words, you cite the source only** (e.g. Van der Spuy (2019) said, ....
- **If you are quoting from a source, you must include a page number** (or paragraph number). For example: Van der Spuy (2020, slide 18) says, "Be consistent! Use the APA Style throughout your thesis".
- In EbscoHost there is a citation tab that will open the correct citation for the source – you can copy the APA citation from it.



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# General Rules of Scientific Writing

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Dr Mervin Van der Spuy <sup>1</sup>

Mouton (2001) composed twelve general rules for academic writing that you may find useful when starting to write your assignments.

## Rule 1: Write clearly, simply and to the point

Students sometimes believe - mistakenly - that writing an assignment means writing long and complex sentences. In their eagerness to impress they resort to using unnecessarily scientific jargon, or exaggerate. This often detracts from the meaning of the sentence. It is not necessary for a piece of writing to be "difficult" in order to be "academic".

- Do not use words or phrases that are redundant - keep it simple and to the point.
- Do not repeat yourself.
- In general, try to keep your sentences simple and short - sentences that are too long invariable confuse the reader as they have to be read more than once, and the flow of the writing is then interrupted
- Keep reader's interested by varying sentence lengths
- It never hurts to make your meaning quite clear in simple sentences

Mauer (1996: 382) has good advice:

*Sentences are meant to convey meaning - they are not treasures to be retained at all costs. A sentence that confuses the writer is bound to confuse readers as well. Be ruthless about your own writing. Change it until it says exactly what you intend it to say.*

## Rule 2: Use positive constructions

A common mistake made by inexperienced writers is to use negative constructions. Such constructions are invariably more difficult to understand than positive constructions. Compare the following two sentences:

- I do not agree that a convenience sample does not bias the results of a survey.
- I agree that a convenience sample biases the results of a survey.

The second sentence, which is positively phrased, is both clearer and shorter, and therefore conveys the meaning of the writer much better than the first sentence.

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<sup>1</sup> Compiled from a number of different sources (see "Additional reading" at the end) and particularly using the twelve rules compiled by Mouton 2001

### **Rule 3: Avoid passive constructions**

Sentences that are written in the passive voice are more difficult to understand. Avoid phrases such as "It was found that..." or "The design that was decided upon..." or "The analyses conducted revealed..." The insistence on using the passive voice has its origins in an old-fashioned (positivist) approach to scientific writing which claimed that such an approach makes the text more neutral and objective. Nowadays it is perfectly acceptable, and even encouraged, to let the author speak! There is nothing wrong with "I found that ..." or "I decided upon a design that ...". This does not mean that one should not occasionally use the passive voice. Use both the passive and the active voice - in the same way that the excessive use of the passive voice becomes boring and presents a false objectivity, the excessive use of the active voice may create the impression of a very self-centered author. The solution lies in finding a balance between these two extremes.

### **Rule 4: Do not use an indefinite "this"**

When you use the word "this" there has to be a clear antecedent. Mauer (1996: 385) uses the following example: "The findings showed that there was a difference between men and women in the completion of the task. This poses a problem." As Mauer points out, the reader cannot be sure whether "this" refers to the findings, the men, the women, the difference, the task, or even the completion of the task.

Even more confusing is the use of "this" at the beginning of a new paragraph. "This" confuses more than it clarifies. It is seldom clear to the reader what the "this" is referring to.

### **Rule 5: Avoid sexist and derogatory language**

Language that may be construed as derogatory to any group or individual should be avoided as it may be considered abusive. This does not imply that one should necessarily follow every fad and fashion that is politically correct. However, it is important to ensure that, for example, any form of sexist language be avoided at all times. Different writers attempt to avoid a sexist bias through the use of rather cumbersome constructions such as "he/she", "he or she" or "(s)he". This, unfortunately, can make the text much less readable. The best option is probably to rephrase your sentences in such a way that the personal pronoun is not required. Where this is not possible, it is preferable to use "he" or "she" throughout and insert a brief statement of your non-sexist intent in the preface, or on the imprint page.

### **Rule 6: Avoid colloquial (spoken) language**

Spoken, informal language is often inappropriately used in assignments, which should contain more formal writing. Inexperienced scholars often write as they speak. The most common examples of this are words such as *get*, *like* (for making comparisons), and *all* (as in "all (of) the books"). Some synonyms for *get*, depending on the context, are *obtain*, *gain*, *acquire*, *find*. (A thesaurus is a useful tool for helping you find synonyms.)

### **Rule 7: Structure and organize your argument**

Before putting your ideas on to paper (or the computer), check that you know what you want to say. Think through the argument and ensure that the sequence and logic are clear and sensible. Map the route of your reasoning by using outlines and refer back to such outlines constantly while you are writing. This contributes to much easier grading by the professor! The use of an outline at the beginning of your assignment, and dividing your assignment into sections and the use of a heading for each, is strongly recommended.

In addition, if you are constructing a lengthy argument, you may want to summarize periodically, as well as indicate how your argument will proceed in the rest of the writing.

### **Rule 8: Assess alternative perspectives and rival points of view**

In academic writing you are required to support your views and correctly cite the sources used. The construction of a persuasive argument also involves taking alternative viewpoints into consideration. You cannot just give your own opinion - you have to academically engage with the material, research alternative views, and then come to your conclusion. As a scholar, you have to show why your reader (in this case your professor) should accept your interpretation as opposed to someone else's. This means that you have to consider explicitly, and perhaps even partially accommodate, those arguments that may reasonably be raised against your viewpoint. This has the additional value of making you appear reasonable and open-minded! *(Please review and avoid the common fallacies of scientific reasoning - see next section).*

### **Rule 9: Think through the sort of evidence that would be convincing to a competent reader**

Academic writing requires that you have to support your reasoning by citing authoritative sources. "Evidence" includes both factual-evidence, as well as your judgements about such facts. However, it is neither convincing nor adequate to state that something is "just my opinion", or to hold that your opinion cannot be criticized because you are "entitled to it". You must substantiate the basis for your position at every turn in your thesis. The stronger your claim is (e.g. causal claims or evaluative claims about the success of an intervention), the stronger the evidence should be to make it rationally persuasive.

### **Rule 10: Use linking devices**

An argument, especially in scientific documents, usually involves citing various kinds of evidence (from the literature, your own data, etc.) and showing how all of this adds up to the conclusions you have reached. Throughout this process you must link various sub-arguments and supporting arguments in order to construct a coherent whole. The central argument should thread through the whole assignment like a golden thread. In this way you will ensure that your argument flows smoothly and logically from section to section, paragraph to paragraph, and sentence to sentence. Linking devices are important tools for ensuring the logical flow of your reasoning. In this regard, use positive and negative conjunctions judiciously and sparingly, but do use them because they are like signposts that guide your reader through your line of reasoning. They also act as cues to yourself that highlight the organization and structure of your argumentation.

### **Rule 11: Edit and rework your writing**

The advent of word processors and computers has made editing and reworking of texts much easier. It is difficult to be creative and critical at the same time. I find it easier to put my ideas onto the screen immediately and then return to them later and edit, reorder and rewrite. Perhaps you will find that you work best the opposite way round. What is certain, however, is that you are unlikely to produce a finished product in the first draft. It is recommended that you capture your thoughts, quotes (make sure you capture it accurately), sources, etc. in separate files or under differentiated headings as you are busy doing your research. Tip: ensure that you use the correct APA citation and that you add the book/article to your bibliography.

All writing, and this is particularly true of academic writing, requires numerous drafts, continuous checking and editing until you are satisfied with the end product.

### **Rule 12: Check grammar and spelling**

Some students do not have English as their home language. Writing in English, especially "scientific" English, does not come naturally. It requires a great deal of practice. In our haste to get our ideas down on paper we are sometimes more concerned with content than form, with the result that we often make mistakes. Some mistakes are easily discovered during proofreading, while others, particularly if you are not literary-minded, are not so easy to spot or to remedy. Most current word processing packages have built-in spell-checkers and grammar-checkers. Get into the routine of applying these facilities after having written the first draft of any text! However, while these tools are useful for initial language screening, they are not foolproof, and your final draft should be subjected to language editing by an expert as well. It is recommended that if English is not your first language, that you do find somebody (an English teacher etc.) to proofread your document before submitting your assignment. You can also make use of programs like [Grammarly](#) and electronically proofread your document. You can choose "Academic" and then the type of paper ("Essay", "Case Study", "Dissertation", etc.). [Grammarly](#) will then look at the document and offer revision and proofreading remarks based on that type of submission.

Always keep these twelve general rules for academic writing Mouton (2001) in mind when writing your assignment.

In addition, you should at the same time take notice and be aware of your own theological and scientific reasoning. We integrate theology and psychology in the counselling courses, it is therefore imperative that your reasoning must be sound. Too often students lose track of their reasoning when they deal with a theological topic that they feel strongly about. Sometimes they get entangled in pseudo-scientific thinking. The following common fallacies occur in theological and scientific reasoning.

# Common Fallacies of Scientific Reasoning <sup>2</sup>

**Unsupported generalizations:** Always ensure that you have enough evidence (empirical, experimental, and documentary) to substantiate your conclusions. Students very often generalize beyond the range of the evidence that has been presented. Avoid using words such as "all" and "every" unless you are certain that there are no exceptions.

Something is not "true" or "believable" because you say it is. You must support your own opinion by citing reputable sources.

**Appeals based on authority:** Claiming that your view is supported by an expert is not always enough or appropriate, and only useful if the person or "authority" quoted is generally recognized as an expert in the field (especially true for internet resources).

Impressing by large numbers (the bandwagon argument): Large numbers alone do not tell enough. Claims made on this basis need to be evaluated on their own merits because statistics can be misleading. For example, claiming that "75 out of 100 patients who used this therapy are still alive" does not tell the entire story.

**Affirming the consequent or the "post hoc" fallacy:** This faulty reasoning results from a misunderstanding about what causes an event. For example, if you ate cereal for breakfast and then the phone rang, it would be wrong to assume that the phone rang because you ate cereal.

**False analogy:** This occurs when you compare several cases on the basis of a few similarities and then conclude that they are similar in other respects as well. For example: South Africa and Zimbabwe are both African countries with developing economies, therefore, they must be similar in other respects (political history) as well. Often the dissimilarities between the cases outweigh the similarities. All relevant characteristics of the cases must be taken into account.

**Circular reasoning:** This is when you try to prove a point by just returning to the point itself. An example of this might be: "Stress leads to unproductive behavior because it is so tedious." "Unproductive" and "tedious" are very closely linked in meaning, so no new information is provided.

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<sup>2</sup> Excerpt amended from: Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your Master's & Doctoral Studies*. page119.

**Ad hominem reasoning (attacking the person):** This directs attention away from the argument at hand by attacking the personality of the individual involved. The person arguing ignores the issue and instead turns the focus to the credibility of his or her opponent. "Not only does Candidate X support abortion, but he's also been married four times."


**Non sequitur reasoning:** *Non sequitur* means "it does not follow", and it refers to conclusions that do not have logical connections to the evidence provided. In other words, you are assuming a connection between events that are disconnected and unrelated. "Violence in movies has a bad effect on children; therefore, no one should see violent movies."

**Red herring argument:** This is when the person arguing brings in a side issue that has no relevance to the point being made. For example: "She is a good doctor; she drives a great car and is really fun."

**"Text-Proofing":** This is the practice of using isolated, out-of-context quotations from Scriptures to establish a proposition or argument in eisegesis (while *exegesis* is the process of drawing out the meaning from a text in accordance with the context and discoverable meaning of its author and context, *eisegesis* occurs when a reader imposes his or her interpretation into and onto the text).

You cannot appeal to a biblical text to prove or justify your theological or psychological position without regard for the context of the passage you are citing, and citing reputable sources that use those texts. Your interpretation of the text is not "authoritative" on its own – you have to cite a reputable author or practitioners in the field of counselling psychology that ascribed the meaning to a specific text. Where there are opposing theological interpretations of issues/topics, you will have to cite sources that hold to the different interpretations, before you can venture to suggest your own conclusion (review rule-8).

Counselling Training falls in the realm of Practical Theology and the way we use and work with scripture is different than in Biblical Theology. Nevertheless, our practical theological theory must still maintain a thoroughly biblical character, but we recognize that the method of proof texting can be problematic for counselling theory and praxis.



*THE OBJECTIVE OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES IS THE DEEPENING OF OUR  
UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IT IS TO LIVE A HUMAN LIFE  
(SULLIVAN, 1983: 304).*

*THE PRIMARY INTELLECTUAL AIM OF THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL  
INQUIRY, QUITE GENERALLY, IS TO HELP US TO REALIZE WHAT IS OF VALUE  
TO US IN OUR PERSONAL AND SOCIAL LIVES. WHAT ULTIMATELY MATTERS  
IS PERSONAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS TOWARDS ENLIGHTENMENT AND  
WISDOM: ALL ACADEMIC PROGRESS IS BUT A MEANS TO THIS END  
(MAXWELL, 1984: 73).*

# Concluding Comments:

*Course Assignments must serve the purpose of preparing the student for further graduate work and especially for eventually writing a thesis or dissertation.*

Your assignment/thesis is the final milestone in a lengthy process of hard work and intensive scholarship. To a large extent, everything depends on the scientific, linguistic and technical quality of the assignment/thesis.

## What are the characteristics of a good assignment/thesis?

- Convinces your professor/supervisor that what you have done is important and worthwhile.
- Presents the results of your research in a logical, systematic and clear manner.
- Contributes to our understanding of the world and, therefore, needs to be taken seriously.
- And, in the final analysis, is a piece of work that you can be proud of

## There are three key aspects of quality in assignment/thesis construction:

- The logic or principles of reasoning that must be adhered to in order to make a strong case for your ultimate conclusions or findings
- The rules that underlie a properly organized and well-structured assignment/thesis/dissertation
- The rules that govern a well-written scientific paper
- Please review the rubric used in assessing and grading the counselling courses.

## Mouton (2001) concludes:

*A final piece of advice: In my experience, the more you read scientific literature, the easier it becomes to develop the skills and style required of a good scholar. The more you read other scientific writings, and especially if you read attentively and reflectively, the more you learn about proper and acceptable forms of scientific reasoning, different ways of structuring your evidence and also ways of presenting such evidence in the most persuasive and convincing manner.*

*In all of this, you should never lose sight of the fact that science and scholarship should be fun and enjoyable. There are few things in life as satisfying as the experience of new scientific insights, the discovery of an interesting and potentially significant new theory or interpretation, and the realization that you have made a worthwhile contribution to our understanding of some aspect of social and natural life.*

# Assessment Rubric for Counselling Courses

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The following *criteria* will be assessed when marking (grading/assessing) your papers in the *Higher Certificate for Christian Counselling* courses. Table One describes the criteria, while Table Two explains the scales in more detail.

The *weight* of each criterion indicates how much, as a percentage, it contributes toward your paper mark. The *description* of each criterion provides an ideal case which would achieve full marks.

You should use the rubric to assess the standard of your own work so that you can improve it before submitting your assignments to SATS.

Criterion	Weight	Description	(Table One)
<b>Introduction and Conclusion</b>	10%	The paper contains a succinct and suitable introduction and conclusion. The introduction clearly introduces the key theme(s) and orients the reader to the significance and structure of the ensuing discussion. The conclusion synthesizes the main points or arguments of the paper, and summarizes the findings and significance.	
<b>Content</b>	25%	The paper demonstrates an in-depth and nuanced understanding of the topic. It reveals an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of major schools of thought, and engages constructively and critically with theological texts and applicable psychological scholarly sources, as is appropriate for the nature of the paper. The paper is written in original wording, appropriately paraphrasing and quoting other sources (the Bible and academic literature). Quotes are short, carefully selected for relevance, and contain text that is not easily paraphrased.	
<b>Development and argumentation</b>	20%	The paper articulates a clear topic or thesis, is well organized and structured, and sustains a coherent and persuasive argument. The paper provides relevant and sufficient facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, and examples to develop the topic. The paper effectively uses linking devices to join the major sections together, clarifying the relationships between claims and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claims and counterclaims.	
<b>Personal &amp; Professional Development</b>	15%	The student is able to express his/her opinion based on critical evaluation of assigned and additional credible sources. Further to this, the student demonstrates the capacity to integrate theology and psychology while articulating the impact of the material upon their personal worldview. The paper conveys the student's ability to apply theory to praxis, personally and professionally.	

Criterion	Weight	Description	(Table One)
<b>Writing</b>	10%	The paper is well written, including spelling, grammar, punctuation, word choice, sentence formation, paragraph structure and coherence. The writing is formal, not colloquial, and it clearly and concisely expresses the information to the reader. It is not repetitive, ambiguous, verbose or vague. In short, it is easy to read, even if the content is advanced.	
<b>Presentation</b>	10%	The paper demonstrates complete mastery of the seminary's technical requirements for formatting an academic paper. This includes, amongst other factors, getting the font, line spacing, paper size, margin setting, page numbers, block quotations, and heading styles correct, in addition to using the correct cover page. Headings do not end in full stops or colons. Formatting (such as punctuation, use of case (capitals) and italics, and hanging indents for works cited) of citations and the bibliography is also correct.	
<b>Referencing</b>	10%	The paper demonstrates complete mastery of the seminary's requirements for referencing sources by means of in-text citations from the Bible and academic literature, and a list of works cited. Ample citations are provided that acknowledge the source of all information in the paper except that which originated with the student, and the full reference for each citation is provided in the list of works cited. Citations and bibliography entries contain all the relevant parameters (e.g. author, date, etc.) in the correct order.	



Criteria (Table 2)	Scales	Exemplary 9.5	Ideal 8.5	Skilled 7.0	Reasonable 6.0	Adequate 5.0	Developing 3.0	Inadequate 1
<b>Intro &amp; Conclusion</b> <b>10%</b>  <i>The paper contains a succinct and suitable introduction and conclusion. The introduction clearly introduces the key theme(s) and orients the reader to the significance and structure of the ensuing discussion. The conclusion synthesizes the main points or arguments of the paper, and summarizes the findings and significance.</i>		Introduction(s) and conclusion(s) are exemplary according to the definition of this criterion.	Introduction(s) and conclusion(s) are ideal and meet most of the definition requirements of this criterion.	Introduction(s) and conclusion(s) demonstrate a good understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criterion.)	Introduction(s) and conclusion(s) demonstrate a reasonable understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criterion.)	Introduction(s) and conclusion(s) demonstrate a partial but adequate understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criterion.)	Introduction(s) and conclusion(s) demonstrate a flawed understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criterion.)	Introduction(s) and conclusion(s) demonstrate almost no understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criterion.)
<b>Content</b> <b>25%</b>  <i>The paper demonstrates an in-depth and nuanced understanding of the topic. It reveals an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of major schools of thought, and engages constructively and critically with theological texts and applicable psychological scholarly sources, as is appropriate for the nature of the paper. The paper is written in original wording, appropriately paraphrasing and quoting other sources (the Bible and academic literature). Quotes are short, carefully selected for relevance, and contain text that is not easily paraphrased.</i>		The content of your paper is exemplary according to the definition of this criterion.	The content of your paper is ideal and meet most of the definition requirements of this criterion.	The content of your paper demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the topic. (See the definition of this criterion.)	The content of your paper demonstrates reasonable knowledge and some understanding of the topic. (See the definition of this criterion.)	The content of your paper demonstrates adequate knowledge and partial understanding of the topic. (See the definition of this criterion.)	The content of your paper demonstrates limited knowledge and flawed understanding of the topic. (See the definition of this criterion.)	The content of your paper demonstrates almost no knowledge or understanding of the topic. (See the definition of this criterion.)

Criteria (Table 2...)	Scales	Exemplary 9.5	Ideal 8.5	Skilled 7.0	Reasonable 6.0	Adequate 5.0	Developing 3.0	Inadequate 1
<b>Develop &amp; Argumentation 20%</b>  <i>The paper articulates a clear topic or thesis, is well organized and structured, and sustains a coherent and persuasive argument. The paper provides relevant and sufficient facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, and examples to develop the topic. The paper effectively uses linking devices to join the major sections together, clarifying the relationships between claims and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claims and counterclaims.</i>		Development & argumentation of the topic are exemplary according to the definition of this criterion.	Development & argumentation of the topic are ideal and meet most of the definition requirements of this criterion.	Development & argumentation of the topic demonstrate a good understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criterion.)	Development & argumentation of the topic demonstrate a reasonable understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criterion.)	Development & argumentation of the topic demonstrate a partial understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criteria.)	Development & argumentation of the topic demonstrate a flawed understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this criterion.)	Development & argumentation of the topic demonstrate almost no understanding of the requirements for them. (See the definition of this Criterion.)
<b>Personal and Professional Development 15%</b>  <i>The student is able to expresses his/her opinion based on critical evaluation of assigned and additional credible sources. Further to this, the student demonstrates the capacity to integrate theology and psychology while articulating the impact of the material upon their personal worldview. The paper conveys the student's ability to apply theory to praxis, personally and professionally.</i>		Insightful exploration of resources as it applies to personal and professional praxis. Integration, balance and change exemplary according to the definition of this criterion.	Connection between student's worldview and material evident. Good integration, assimilation, and application. Meeting most of the definition requirements of this criterion.	Evidence of the course's impact on student's worldview is evident. Good integration as student seeks a more balanced approach to praxis. (See the definition of this criterion.)	Reasonable integration, assimilation and application. Some evidence of course's impact on worldview. (See the definition of this criterion.)	You demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of the course material, and you've shared your worldview, but not always integrate or assimilate. (See the definition of this criteria.)	It is evident that you have interacted somewhat with the material, though there is a lack of insight as it relates to personal assimilation or integration of information. (See the definitions of this criterion)	You have not engaged with the material. There is no evidence of learning, personal application, nor integration of assigned material. (See the definitions of this criterion)



# Rubric CCC PowerPoint Assignment

Criteria	Pts
<b>Introduction and Conclusion</b> The slide show contains an arresting opening slide (introduction) and a meaningful closing slide (conclusion). The opening slide(s) is conspicuous and clearly introduces the key theme(s) of the presentation. The concluding slides synthesizes the main points or arguments of the presentation and challenges the viewer to action.	10 pts
<b>Content and Composition of Slides</b> Presentation shows originality and inventiveness. The content and ideas are presented in a unique and interesting way. All graphics are attractive (size and colors) and support the theme/content of the presentation. Text is concise and clear, attracts attention, and is unambiguous. The slide is balanced with sufficient white space.	15 pts
<b>Content and Composition of Notes/Narration</b> The slide notes/narration demonstrates an in-depth and nuanced understanding of the topic, but is formulated in understandable terms for a presentation in public. It informs and engages the listener constructively with applicable theological and psychological information. The narration is composed in appropriate language for a presentation.	15 pts
<b>Development and Argumentation</b> Information is organized in a clear, logical way. It is easy to anticipate the type of material that might be on the next slide. The PowerPoint contains a minimum of 10 slides. All slides and accompanying notes support the theme/content of the presentation. There is a logical flow from one slide to the next. The presentation articulates a clear topic or thesis, is well organized and structured, and sustains a coherent and persuasive argument.	15 pts
<b>Writing</b> The slide text and notes are well written, including spelling, grammar, punctuation, word choice, sentence formation, paragraph structure and coherence. The writing, although purposed for presentation, is not colloquial, but sufficiently academic, yet still appropriate for a presentation. It is not repetitive, ambiguous, verbose or vague. In short, it is easy to listen to, even if the content is advanced.	15 pts
<b>Referencing</b> The presentation demonstrates complete mastery of the seminary's requirements for referencing sources by means of in-text citations in the notes. The source of quotes in slide-text are correctly cited. A complete list of works cited is included in the bibliography.	15 pts
<b>Personal &amp; Professional Development</b> The student is able to expresses his/her opinion based on critical evaluation of assigned and additional credible sources. Further to this, the student demonstrates the capacity to integrate theology and psychology while articulating the impact of the material upon their personal worldview. The presentation conveys the student's ability to apply theory to praxis, personally and professionally. Personal application connects with audience on a visceral felt-experienced level.	15 pts
	<b>Total points: 100</b>

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# Additional Reading & Resources

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Kennedy, M.L. & Smith, H.M. (1986). *Academic writing*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

*Academic writing* examines, analyses and gives exercises for understanding university readings and for writing many types of assignment. The book also discusses how to approach various kinds of essay topics (e.g. compare and contrast) .

Lewis, R. & Inglis, J. (1982). *Report writing*. Cambridge: National Extension College.

*Report writing* is a clear and concise book that demonstrates an approach to writing effective reports for schools or business. The book contains numerous examples and exercises to help the reader interact with the information.

Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your Master's & Doctoral Studies*. Pretoria: VanSchaik

Although aimed at the South African market and providing a resource guide and book for South African Universities, an excellent book that will help all graduate students.

Mauer, K.F. (1996). The art of scientific writing. In J.G. Garbers (Ed.), *Effective research in the human sciences*. Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik. In an excellent overview of the issues involved in scientific writing, Mauer begins with a discussion of a number of misconceptions about academic writing commonly held by students. He then discusses some general principles of structuring a thesis, techniques for reviewing the literature, some standards for scientific writing and language usage, and concludes with a section on the use and presentation of tables and figures.

Strunk, W. & White, E.B. (1972). *The elements of style*. New York: Macmillan. Although somewhat old, still one of the best books on academic writing. The book includes chapters on grammar, composition, and an especially useful one on word usage.

Winkler, A.C. & McCuen, J .R. (1999). *Writing the research paper*, 5th ed. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace. A very practical workbook on writing research papers and theses. It is particularly strong on matters of style, referencing and systems of documentation. It includes examples of student papers (from the United States) and covers both the MLA and APA bibliographic and citation styles.



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# WEB RESOURCES:

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<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <a href="#">+ General Academic Writing</a>        | <a href="#">+ Research and Citation</a>              |
| <a href="#">+ Grammar and Mechanics</a>           | <a href="#">+ English as a Second Language (ESL)</a> |
| <a href="#">+ Literary Analysis and Criticism</a> | <a href="#">+ Writing in the Social Sciences</a>     |
| <a href="#">+ Writing in Engineering</a>          | <a href="#">+ Creative Writing</a>                   |
| <a href="#">+ Teaching Writing</a>                | <a href="#">+ Tutoring Writing</a>                   |

<http://www.brint.com/papers/writing.htm>

[http://twp.duke.edu/uploads/media\\_items/academic-style-guide.original.pdf](http://twp.duke.edu/uploads/media_items/academic-style-guide.original.pdf)

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>

<http://homepages.inf.ed.ac.uk/jbednar/writingtips.html>

<https://www.grammarly.com/>



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# ASSIGNMENT TEMPLATE EXAMPLE

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- ✚ This is a cover page and assignment template example.
- ✚ Please delete all notes and explanations before you submit.

**Title**

By

**Name**

Assignment 1

Course code: Course name

Higher Certificate in Christian Counselling

South African Theological Seminary

**Date**

Assessor: Assessor Name

## Title of Assignment

Introduction.....	1
1. Write your own heading here.....	2
1.2 Sub-headings.....	3
1.3 Sub-headings.....	4
2. Write your own heading here.....	5
2.2 Sub-headings.....	6
2.3 Sub-headings.....	7
Conclusion.....	8
Bibliography.....	9

This is a table of contents. Don't capitalize headings, don't use 'bold'. Introduction, conclusion and bibliography are not numbered.

# Title of Assignment

## Introduction (font Arial 14)

Text – Use Arial font size 12 for text and font size. Take note of spacing between sections, and line spacing: 1.5. Consult Smith's 'Academic Writing and Theological Research' (2008), on how to write a good academic assignment (Ch. 1–3). Find it under 'Information Kiosk – Student Guides'.

## 1. Heading 1

### 1.1 Sub-heading (font Arial 12)

Text. Organize the content in sub-headings. Create your own headings and sub-headings – the assignment guidelines are not titles for headings.

### 1.2 Sub-heading

Text. Write meaningful paragraph, not lists/bullet-points.

You need to have in-text citations in the text of your assignment. They look like this (Huysen 2015:66). Verify your content and statements, as well as your opinions, by citing credible academic sources (Smith 2008, Ch.3). Consult the 'Counselling Academic Writing Tutorial' to access the APA Referencing Guide. Find it under 'Modules – Important documents you must review – Tutorials'.

## 2. Heading 2

### 2.1 Sub-heading

Text. Be consistent in the use of punctuation in in-citations (Smith 2008).

## Conclusion

Consult Smith (2008:13–16) on what is required for writing introductions and conclusions. They are the pillars on which your entire assignment rests.

**Works cited** This is your bibliography, where you list all the sources you used in an assignment.

Here, you show what sources you used. (see Smith 2008: Chapter 4 for details on how to format your references properly;

For counselling assignments, you must use the APA Referencing Style. [APA In-Text Citations](#)

Internet sources: do not provide the entire URL, [www.webaddress.com](http://www.webaddress.com), 2021-01-10. (date of access)

Muller I (2021a). Multiple entries by the same author, are numbered a, b, c, etc. Indicate the same author by an 8-space indent from the second entry onward.

\_\_\_\_\_(2021b). Example. Reflect these entries in the in-citations.

Consult the Counselling Academic Writing Tutorial (p.7) to view how to reference slide shows correctly.

**Works consulted** This is an additional page to the bibliography, where you list all the sources you have consulted, but not necessarily cited in your assignment. Delete if not needed.

Follow the same format as in the Works cited, with hanging indent. Follow the same format as in the Works cited, with hanging indent.