

**Course Description**

The Proseminar introduces incoming degree students to the communal study and pursuit of five essential practices for theological study and ministerial formation at Aquinas Institute of Theology: *written and oral communication, close reading of texts, analysis of social context, theological reflection, and collaboration*. Students will study and engage each *practice*, as well as set goals for future development in preparation for the admission-to-candidacy process.

**Course Objectives:** Coursework is designed to initiate students into graduate-level theological study as practiced at Aquinas Institute, while giving students the skills and tools necessary to be a full partner in theological conversation, including:

- the means of accessing and effectively using St. Louis University's research library and technology
- successful approaches to reading and writing at the graduate level
- methods of contextual analysis
- methods of theological reflection
- skills for collaboration, especially with peers in study and ministry
- orientation to the Dominican vision of the *Sacra Praedicationis* as practiced in the mission of the Order of Preachers

**Course Method:** The course will make use of effective, on-line pedagogical practices which foster wisdom communities. Some lecture, but more plenary group discussions of readings, small group conversation, and integrative exercises will round out the course.

**Course Requirements**

- access to the internet and ability to use Blackboard
- access to LiveText\*
- regular, active participation in-class, demonstrating understanding and integration of course readings
- willingness to engage self-reflection and conversation with the class as a learning community

**Evaluation:** Demonstration of course outcomes through student writing, completion of all assignments, in-class discussion of readings, class and video presentations, and preparation of a learning portfolio.

**Required Texts**

Gallagher, Michael Paul. *Clashing Symbols: An Introduction to Faith & Culture*. Rev. ed. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2003.

Killen, Patricia O'Connell and John de Beer. *The Art of Theological Reflection*. New York: Crossroad, 1994.

Sofield, Loughlan and Carroll Juliano. *Collaboration: Uniting Our Gifts in Ministry*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2000.

Taylor, Barbara Brown. *When God is Silent*. Boston, MA: Cowley Publications, 1998.

Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2007.

Additional required readings will be available through SLU e-reserves.

**Important Note:** There is an additional required fee of \$100 for LiveText access beyond course tuition. This on-line tool is an essential component for the development of the Admission to Candidacy portfolio.