RD 806 READING COURSE GUIDELINES

REVISED: JULY 2026

In the case where a Master of Arts (Theological Studies) student does not qualify to or opts not to write a Thesis, a reading course can be taken along with two courses (typically in the student's major area) to complete the program of study. This is a student-driven project that is overseen by a faculty member.

For a student in the Master of Arts in Leadership and Management, a reading course that applies very directly to the type of service or ministry for which the student needs added equipping can be used to replace the SRP.

The following provides an outline of the process:

- Faculty Supervisor: The student requests a faculty member to oversee the reading course. Most often this will be the program coordinator or the primary teaching faculty in the area of study.
- Selection of a Topic: The student and faculty member agree on a focal point for the reading course. The purpose of the course is to undertake extensive reading on the chosen topic, leading to a written integrated reading report.
- Submission of a Reading Proposal: The student should submit a 5-7 page written proposal to the faculty supervisor for approval. This proposal will include a bibliography of 3000-4000 pages of reading in the area of study. This should be composed of books and articles. The faculty member can approve the bibliography, request additions to it, or veto selections. In the development of the proposal, the student should ask the following questions:
    - Why have you chosen a reading course rather than a thesis?
    - What is the core issue you wish to read about?
    - Why is the subject important and relevant enough for this project?
    - What will you read? Include your bibliography of proposed readings *and b*riefly explain how you went about selecting them and why you chose the readings you did. What contrasting perspectives have you included? Why are you selecting these books/articles for detailed attention?
    - What is the expected payoff? *Sub-questions:* How will you apply the results of your research? What difference will it make in your life and thinking? Who else will benefit from your research?
    - How will you report on your reading?
- Registration of a Reading Course: Upon approval of the proposal, the student and supervisor must fill out and submit the Reading Course Request Form to the Seminary Dean's office, who, upon approval, will pass it on to the Academic Services office.

- Submission of Final Paper for Grading: Once the proposal has been approved, the student will proceed independently to read the assigned materials and submit a 25-30 page paper, formatted according to the proposal, for review and grading. If the supervisor feels that the project is inadequate, he or she may return the paper to the student for further revisions before final grading.
- Time Frame: From the time of registration, students have 8 months to complete the course. If an extension is required, the student must make a formal request through the Academic Appeals process as outlined in the Seminary Calendar. At no time is a reading course allowed to extend beyond one extension. Failure to complete the course within the time frame allotted above will result in an "F" and no reinstatement of a Reading Course is permitted.

*Although students are typically allowed 8 months to complete a Reading Course, proposals for the Reading Course are due by November 1 prior to the year of graduation, and must be completed no later than four weeks prior to graduation.