TCMI Form and Style guidelines for written assignments

Writing style

Written assignments will need to use an academic writing style with the following characteristics:

- it cannot be oral language written down;

- content is thought-through ahead of time and is to be understood in absence of author;

- content is logically structured and clearly presents relationships between parts of the argument using transitions;

- uses full and often long sentences; coherent and unified paragraphs;

- less use of figurative speech (although some use of metaphors, hyperboles, irony, symbolism is encouraged);

- neutral tone, avoids emotional expressions.

Avoids (any elements of oral style):

- direct address toward audience (you, we, us);

- sermonic or testimonial style with instructions, recommendations, motivation of audience with emotionally charged phrases;

- rhetorical, leading questions;

- using incomplete and run-on sentences, too short or too long paragraphs, missing relationships and transitions between sentences and parts.

Compositional elements

The **Introduction** is a mandatory part of any written assignment and contains several required elements which all need to be present even though, depending on the size and kind of the assignment, will not necessarily have the same sequence and/or length in every paper:

- introductory statement(s) (“hook” – catch attention of reader);

- topic and thesis of the assignment (what ‘response’ to the topic will you argue in this assignment);

- Significance of topic (significance and importance of topic, justification and need for discussion);

- Composition/structure of project (what sections/chapters with what content will follow)

The **main body** of the assignment contains several interrelated sections which in a logical progression present and defend the proposed thesis. At the end all presented ideas are summarized in the **Conclusion**.

##### Pagination

Pagination can be divided into page numbers for the main body and page numbers for the front matter. The front matter (everything before the Introduction, for example: title page, table of contents) is numbered using lower case Roman numerals, i, ii, iii, etc. The title page is i, but the number does not appear on the page. Other front matter pages begin with ii.

The text, or main body, begins with page 1 and is numbered consecutively through the end of the paper including bibliography.

##### Table of Contents

The entries in the Table of Contents must completely agree, in content and type style, with the headings in the text. Included must be chapter headings as well as first and second level sub-headings with page numbers. Sub-headings at the third level and beyond (e.g., headings with three decimals, such as 2.3.4.1) need not be included in the Table of Contents.

##### Fonts and Spacing

It is recommended to use Times New Roman, Arial or Courier New typefaces with 1,5 or 2,0 spacing. Use the same font size throughout the manuscript. Font size of the main text should be 12pt and footnotes 10pt. Entries within a table may be as small as 8 point. Avoid using fancy scripts, and use italic or bold type sparingly, only for emphasis or headings.

##### Headings

Headings are direction signals to the reader and this way significantly improve the readability and accessibility of the text. All headings must accurately reflect the material that appears beneath them. Headings should be followed by text, before the next subheading. A heading cannot have less than two subheadings (if there is no B, there cannot be A).

##### Illustrations and Enclosures

Figures (drawings, photographs, charts, graphs, maps, pictures) and tables may be used if appropriate. Each graphic must be numbered and titled appropriately. All tables and figures should be referred to in the text at the relevant point, preferably before it appears.

##### Margins

The margins should be 2 cm. The top margin should be 3 cm for the first page of a chapter, table of contents, bibliography, or other division.

##### Use of Bible

Place references to Bible verses into parenthesis (not footnote). The Bible and Bible translations are not listed in the bibliography. Identify the Bible translation being used in the text with a parenthetical reference (e.g. I Cor 13:1, NIV) or in the first footnote.

##### Documentation style

It is suggested that for referencing sources in footnotes and bibliography you use the documentation style commonly used in your country. You can also choose to use North American styles, such as the American Psychological Association (APA) style or the Turabian style. The most important guideline is that you consistently follow the chosen style and include ALL necessary information in footnotes and bibliography.

The bibliography contains all sources used in the assignment in all formats, including oral, media and electronic sources. The sources are listed according to the alphabet by the author’s/editor’s last name (if there is not author/editor, the title is used). Internet resources must always have an URL and the date of access.

NoodleBib Express (<http://noodletools.com/login.php>) will help to automatically generate bibliography entries using American documentation styles; the site <http://www.snoskainfo.ru> will help to generate entries according to the Russian GOST. MS Office 2007 and 2010 also have a function “References” which helps to automatically create citations and bibliographies.

Use footnotes to indicate all sources from which information is included in the assignment; when there is no proper documentation of sources you can be accused of **plagiarism**. Please keep in mind that direct (word-for-word) quotes need quotation marks and a footnote; indirect references, for example a paraphrase or a summary of another author’s ideas, must always be marked by a footnote. You are encouraged to extensively engage other authors’ ideas and have many footnotes, but the assignment also needs to remain your own work and present your thinking.

Example of a title page:

CHRISTOLOGY OF THE EPISTLE OF HEBREWS

Michael А. Brown

Course: Theology of the New Testament

Professor: Dr. Rollin Grams

TCMI Institute

Heiligenkreuz, Austria

year