Lection coram Guidelines

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Approval of the Lectio coram Topics and Procedure for the Lectio coram

1. Students should begin working on the Lectio topics during the first semester.
2. Students are to prepare ten Lectio coram topics. These topics should include 1) the thesis topic, 2) a topic in moral theology 2), three topics in scripture, 3) three topics in dogmatic theology, and 4) two additional topics.
3. Each topic must list eight to ten sources, at least five of which are scholarly books or articles. Each source must have a brief annotation of about three sentences that notes the importance of the source to the topic. If a Church document such as the Catechism is cited, the portion of the source relevant to the topic should be noted. References for the location of Church documents may be to the Vatican website.
4. When the student has prepared the proposal, it should be submitted to the STL lectio reviewer who will determine (possibly after several revisions) that the Lectio proposal is suitable for submission to the STL degree committee for approval. The student must make all changes using the “Track Changes” tool for Word documents. The assessment of the STL Lectio reviewer largely pertains to the format of the proposal; the STL degree committee may recommend substantive changes to the topics and to the bibliography.
5. When the STL lectio reviewer judges the proposal to be suitable for submission to the STL degree committee, he/she will inform the student that it is being sent to the STL degree committee.
6. When the proposal has been approved by the STL degree committee, the STL degree committee chair will submit the proposal to the academic dean for his review and approval, who may require changes to be made.
7. Only when the proposals are in a form acceptable to the academic dean and only when a “library-ready” copy of the thesis is delivered to the office of the academic dean, will the Lectio coram be scheduled. Students may participate in commencement exercises only if the Lectio is scheduled through the Office of Dean of Studies by April 1, for completion sometime prior to June 22 (see current Academic Calendar).
The *Lectio* Presentation

1. After the *Lectio coram* topics are approved, the STL degree committee designates three of the ten topics as eligible subjects for the student’s *Lectio*. The STL degree committee chair then fixes a time and date for the *Lectio*. The academic dean shall arrange for a board of three qualified persons to hear and assess the *Lectio* and appoint a moderator from the board. Not less than seventy-two and not more than eighty-four hours before the *Lectio*, the academic dean shall convey the choice of the three designated topics to the student who then chooses one to be the subject of his lecture.

2. The *Lectio coram* shall proceed as follows:

   a) The student shall deliver the *Lectio coram* at a time and place designated by the academic dean. At the opening of the *Lectio* the student shall begin with a prayer, announce the selected topic, and confine his remarks to that topic. The student shall lecture for forty-five minutes. The use of handouts and/or audio-visual material is at the student’s discretion. Each member of the board shall then question the student for not more than fifteen minutes.

   b) The *Lectio* moderator shall indicate when five minutes are left of the student’s original forty-five minutes, when two minutes are left, and when time has expired, at which point the student shall cease presenting. Likewise it shall be indicated when respective questioners have two minutes left of their allotted time and when their time has expired.

   c) After the board members complete their questioning, they will adjourn, and the audience will be given the opportunity to ask the student questions on the topic of his *Lectio*. The moderator shall see that the *Lectio* does not exceed two hours.

   d) The board will determine a grade: Pass with High Distinction; Pass with Distinction; Pass; Fail. Only with the permission of the student will an announcement of successful completion of the Lectio be announced; the grade will not be announced. The grade will be entered on the grading sheet that each member of the *Lectio* board will sign. A student who has failed can petition to attempt another *Lectio* at a future date.

(Revised by STL Degree Committee Feb. 13, 2018)
Preparation for the Lectio Coram

Picking topics

1. In your first semester, try to determine how you might like to choose topics for the Lectio coram. It is wise to pick topics for which you could write papers for classes, topics that you believe will be helpful to you in your future work.
   a. You may want to cluster your topics around one or several themes. For example, if you know you will be working with an apostolate to the family, you may want several of the topics to deal with the family from different perspectives.
   b. On the other hand, in order to broaden your base of knowledge, you may want to do considerably diverse topics.
   c. Since this is a pastoral program, you should be trying to blend the theoretical with the practical.
2. Since an STL degree qualifies you to teach in a seminary, you should be prepared to present topics with the competence appropriate to that level.

Compiling and presenting the bibliography:

1. Each topic must list eight to ten sources, at least five of which are scholarly books or articles.
2. When composing a bibliography, you can benefit from consulting the most recent scholarly sources as a guide. The bibliographies of those sources will generally list the most authoritative sources, both historical and recent.
3. If you are having trouble determining if your sources are worthy of attention, once you have compiled a list, seek advice from the faculty member who has most knowledge in that area. You should have done considerable work yourself. If you truly don’t know how to begin, you could ask a faculty member for direction on how to begin, but do not ask for a bibliography. Part of the purpose of the Lectio coram is to provide you with an opportunity to sharpen and display your research skills.
4. Format the bibliography in accord with the Turabian Manual.
5. In your bibliography, list only works that you have read or significantly consulted in the preparation of your topic. Do not list works that are well-known or seem related to your topic unless you have actually made use of them. Examiners may ask you to discuss any works listed in your bibliography for the topic on which you present.
6. Do not list large collections of works unless you have made use of all or most of the collection. Do not simply list, for example, “Documents of Vatican II” or “The Bible.” Identify specifically which document(s) of Vatican II you have drawn on and which part(s) of the Bible you used in the development of your topic and their relevance.
7. Nature of sources
   a. For the most part, sources should be from books published by an academic press or articles published in academic journals.
b. In most fields, there are authoritative books or articles that simply must be cited. In many fields, it is important to cite the most up-to-date books.

c. Some of articles and works may appear on the internet, and it is fine to use them as sources if they have been published by academic publishers or if the author is a known expert in the field.

d. Some “popular” works have assumed an important status and they may be used.

8. When citing official ecclesiastical documents, first provide an official citation to the work in question, and then list what version or translation of the work you used, if different from the original. Official citations for universal ecclesiastical documents may be to the Vatican website.

9. For each source, provide a brief annotation (about three sentences) in which you identify the portion of the source you will use and the relevance of the source to your topic. The annotation should identify precisely why the work is relevant to the Lectio topic. General descriptions of the content of the source are not acceptable. In the annotation of the sources, use full sentences. Do not copy descriptions from other sources; provide your own.

**Submitting proposed topics**

1. You may consult the STL Lectio reviewer at any point in the process.

2. Submit your proposal in Word doc format to the STL lectio reviewer. The reviewer will make comments in a “track changes” format, and the student will use “track changes” to make all subsequent revisions. It is important that the reviewer be able to find changes quickly and not have to reread the entire proposal. There may be several such exchanges.

3. The reviewer is not responsible for approving the topics or finding all errors or inadequacies. Members of the STL degree committee may want a topic or topics refined; they may find more errors and may find some bibliographies inadequate.

4. When the STL lectio reviewer judges the proposal to be suitable for submission to the STL degree committee, he/she will inform the student that it is being sent to the STL degree committee.
Format for *Lectio Coram* Proposal

Your Name

Part I: List of 10 topics in this order. List only the topics; do not provide description of the topics.

Thesis Topic:

1. Moral Topic

2. Scriptural Topics

3.

4.

5.

Dogmatic Theology

6.

7.

8.

Additional

9.

10.

Part II. List of *Lectio* topics in the same order as above, with annotated bibliography.

(Revised by the STL Degree Committee, Feb. 13, 2018)
Lectio coram Grading Rubric

Student’s Name: ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluated by:</th>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category / Grade</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theological Level</strong></td>
<td>Explains theological concepts at the level of those who can understand original texts &amp; appropriate scholarship.</td>
<td>Explains theological concepts reasonably well at the level of those who can understand original texts &amp; appropriate scholarship.</td>
<td>Explains theological concepts at an acceptable level for those who can understand original texts &amp; appropriate scholarship.</td>
<td>Poorly explains theological concepts to those who can understand original texts &amp; appropriate scholarship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Excellently utilizes scripture in establishing the foundations of his argument &amp; supporting the points.</td>
<td>Utilizes scripture well in establishing the foundations of the argument &amp; supporting his points.</td>
<td>Acceptably utilizes scripture in establishing the foundations of the argument &amp; supporting his points.</td>
<td>Poorly utilizes scripture in establishing the foundations of the argument &amp; supporting his points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pastoral Application</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates the relevance of his argument to the pastoral situation of the Church today &amp; to the project of the new evangelization.</td>
<td>Demonstrates reasonably well the relevance of his argument to the pastoral situation of the Church today &amp; to the project of the new evangelization.</td>
<td>Acceptably demonstrates the relevance of his argument to the pastoral situation of the Church today &amp; to the project of the new evangelization.</td>
<td>Poorly demonstrates the relevance of his argument to the pastoral situation of the Church today &amp; to the project of the new evangelization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category / Grade</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depth of Research</td>
<td>Demonstrates an excellent degree of familiarity with the materials listed in the bibliography in making the presentation &amp; in answering questions.</td>
<td>Utilizes most of the materials listed in the bibliography in making the presentation &amp; in answering questions.</td>
<td>Utilizes some of the materials listed in the bibliography in making the presentation &amp; in answering questions.</td>
<td>Poorly utilizes the materials listed in the bibliography in making the presentation &amp; in answering questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Skills</td>
<td>Demonstrates the ability to present fairly &amp; critique intelligently positions opposed to his own.</td>
<td>Demonstrates reasonable ability to present fairly &amp; critique intelligently positions opposed to his own.</td>
<td>Demonstrates acceptable ability to present fairly &amp; critique intelligently positions opposed to his own.</td>
<td>Demonstrates poor ability to present fairly &amp; critique intelligently positions opposed to his own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidity of Argument</td>
<td>Backs up his position with solid evidence &amp; reasons.</td>
<td>Backs up his/her position with good evidence &amp; reasons.</td>
<td>Backs up his position with acceptable evidence &amp; reasons.</td>
<td>Poorly backs up his position without adequate evidence &amp; reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of Presentation</td>
<td>Clearly organizes all the parts of the presentation.</td>
<td>Organizes reasonably well the parts of the presentation.</td>
<td>Acceptably organizes the parts of his presentation.</td>
<td>Poorly organizes parts of the presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill in Answering Questions</td>
<td>Answers thoroughly &amp; directly questions posed to him by the examining panel.</td>
<td>Answers reasonably well the questions posed to him by the examining panel.</td>
<td>Acceptably answers the questions posed to him by the examining panel.</td>
<td>Answers poorly the questions posed to him by the examining panel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Assessment</td>
<td>High Distinction</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Fail</td>
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Scholastic Integrity Policy *(from the SHMS Bulletin)*

In keeping with its mission, Sacred Heart Major Seminary expects each student to be responsible and honorable in course work and in the classroom. A student who is found to be involved in any unethical practices in connection with any work required for a course will be held accountable. A student whose conduct does not meet with the standard of SHMS will be asked to resign from the academic program.

In academic life, there are conventions by which we express our debt to the ideas and language of other writers. To violate these conventions deprives an author of the credit for the originality of ideas and his/her expressions. Students who violate these conventions pass off as their own work that of other minds. This violation is called “plagiarism.” This is a form of stealing. Cheating is to deceive fraudulently or to violate the rules dishonestly.

Undergraduate norm: A grade of F will be given for the specific test, paper, or assignment and a copy of the item will be made for evidence.

Graduate norm: Any student cheating on any test, assignment, or term paper, or who commits plagiarism will receive an automatic F for the course.

The faculty member will schedule a meeting with the student at the time of the offense to discuss the situation. The dean of studies will be notified of the meeting and will be given the evidence in a confidential manner.

If the dean of studies receives two notifications of academic dishonesty for any one student, the dean of studies will schedule a conference with the student and the faculty member(s) involved. If the faculty member requests a conference after one notification, then the dean of studies will schedule such a conference. The dean of studies will be an objective observer at all such conferences.

At the time of the conference, the evidence will be presented and a decision rendered. If academic dishonesty is not evident, all documents will be destroyed and no further action will be taken. If the dean of studies determines that evidence indicates academic dishonesty, a letter of academic misconduct will be sent to the student and a copy filed in the student’s academic file.

Further sanctions may be imposed depending on the seriousness of the matter:

- The student will be placed on a one semester academic probation.
- The student will be suspended for one semester.
- The student will be dismissed from the institution.

These sanctions will be imposed according to the following guidelines:

- Clarity of evidence
- Nature of the course (e.g. research, etc.)
- Weight of the assignment (refer to the syllabus)
- Standing of the student within the institution (first year, continuing education, etc.)
- Type of academic dishonesty (which includes, but is not limited to, the degree of plagiarism, stealing of exam, cheating on tests/exams, or re-submission of assignments for which credit has been given previously, alteration of documents or records, forgery, stealing or defacing institutional or library materials)
- The number of times the individual student has been involved in cases of academic misconduct

The student has a right to request an appeal through an academic review board. An academic review board is assembled by the dean of studies to address the appeal. The academic review board is comprised of three professors selected by the dean. The board meets with the student making the appeal as well as the professor. After the meeting, the academic review board submits its decision to the dean of studies.