THE CENTER FOR THEOLOGICAL WRITING
0021, 0029 & 0037 WESTBROOK – DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

THE FIRST-YEAR MANDATORY WRITING ASSESSMENT 2014–15

WRITING ASSESSMENT TOPICS

MDiv Topic: Read R. W. L. Moberly’s essay “Living Dangerously.” In a well-rounded essay, give a brief account of Moberly’s discussion of the challenges of biblical interpretation, and then explain whether and why you agree or disagree with what he says. (Your response to Moberly should constitute about two-thirds of your paper.)

MTS Topic: What is theological writing?

MACS Topic: The foundation course for the MACS program is titled “Inhabiting the Christian Drama.” A drama typically has several “acts” or transitions in the plot line. Identify some of the major “acts” or turning points in the “Christian drama” and explain how one “inhabits” this drama.

(If you are in the ThM program, a visiting, exchange, or non-degree program student, or have formerly completed our assessment, you are exempt from the writing requirement.)

INSTRUCTIONS

• your essay should be between 800-1000 words in length. It should not be construed as a research paper, but you are free to use and/or quote from whatever sources you may choose. MDiv students are encouraged to make use of pertinent quotations from Moberly, but these should not be overdone. All students should use proper documentation (parenthetical references or footnotes) when quoting or alluding to the ideas and words of others.

• your tone should be formal

• format using Times New Roman 12 point font and double spacing. Please put your name and email address at the top of your paper

• email your essay to jheyhoe@div.duke.edu by 11:59pm on Tuesday, August 26

Your paper will be passed to one of our writing assessors, who will read your work carefully, noting what you do well and what might need some improvement. He or she will contact you to set up a (mandatory) meeting in order to discuss your paper and talk through issues pertaining to theological writing and what your professors and preceptors might expect in your assignments.

We hope that you will find the assessment process a valuable beginning to your studies.

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1 R. W. L. Moberly, “Living Dangerously: Genesis 22 and the Quest for Good Biblical Interpretation,” in The Art of Reading Scripture, ed. Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). This article can be accessed via the Writing Center or OT 752 Sakai sites. If you have trouble logging onto Sakai, please email me (jheyhoe@div.duke.edu).