

READING STRATEGIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

A RESOURCE PROVIDED BY THE LPTS ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER (ASC)



Read not only for information —read for idea formation.

- Read to analyze, evaluate, and engage.
- Read strategically, not line-by-line.
- Read to understand and evaluate the central argument and its significance.

*Doctoral reading especially asks: **How does this work contribute to the discipline?***

Strategic Reading Steps

1. **Preview** to understand the overall argument.
 - a. Read the introduction and conclusion.
 - b. Identify the topic or issue the author addresses.
 - c. Note the structure – read the table of contents or headings.
2. **Read** to answer key questions.
 - a. Who is the audience?
 - b. What is the thesis or central claim?
 - c. What theological tradition or perspective shapes the argument?
 - d. What are the implications for doctrine, ministry, or practice?

Not every paragraph deserves equal time.

3. Take research-oriented notes.

Instead of highlighting extensively, use margin notes and then record these key features:

 - a. Citation for this source in APA, Chicago, or Turabian style
 - b. Thesis or central claim
 - c. Author's position in the field
 - d. Strengths / Weaknesses
 - e. Relevance to the course or to my research

Whether [handwritten](#)¹ or [digital](#)², [research notes](#)³ [KS1.1] are resources for future papers, sermons, and the capstone project.

Time Management for Heavy Reading Loads

When assigned 200–300 pages per week:

1. Identify the core text(s).
2. Deep read the most central argument in those texts.
3. Take research notes.
4. Prepare one thoughtful question or critique.
5. Strategically read supporting materials.

Graduate reading success depends on discernment, not volume.

¹Stanford University. (n.d.). The Cornell method of taking notes. Center for Teaching and Learning. <https://ctl.stanford.edu/students/cornell-method-taking-notes>

²Microsoft. (2026). Basic tasks in OneNote on Windows. Microsoft Support. <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/basic-tasks-in-onenote-on-windows-2eee07df-9f05-4d5f-9806-afcadb2d80b9>

³Meadville Lombard Theological School. (2022, August 24). Library: How to read for grad school: Take notes!. Take notes! - How to Read for Grad School - Library at Meadville Lombard. <https://library.meadville.edu/howtoreadforgradschool/notes>

The Academic Support Center (ASC) supports students with various aspects including:

- Academic Writing
- Study Skills
- Academic Honesty
- Strategic Reading
- Ordination Support
- Career Mapping
- Citation Support
- ADA Academic Accommodation
- Critical Thinking & Analytical Skills Development



LISA LIAS
MANAGER, ACADEMIC
SUCCESS CENTER
LLIAS@LPTS.EDU



SUSAN KANTER
ASC WRITING COACH/
TUTOR
SKANTER@LPTS.EDU



ELI MEGIBBEN
ASC WRITING COACH/
TUTOR
EMEGIBBEN@LPTS.EDU



The ASC is a drop-in center located in the E.M. White Library, Room 108, and also available by appointment in person/online!

Or Scan to
Book Directly!

