

Associated Canadian Theological Schools RES 500 A (Research Strategies)

William. B. Badke, ACTS Librarian
Fall – 2009
1 credit hour

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Class Dates: Wednesdays
Class time: 1:00 – 2:00

I. Course Description

A study of the basic strategies required for the effective researching of a wide variety of topics. Areas covered include topic viability, location of materials in several formats, computer database searching (including the Internet), reading strategies, note organization, and the outlining and writing processes.

II. Objectives

By the end of this course, each student should:

- A. demonstrate the ability to formulate a strategy for research;
- B. demonstrate the ability to make a topic viable and organize its sub points;
- C. demonstrate an appreciation for planned research from topic to completed project.
- D. show skill in identifying a research problem, acquiring a variety of informational resources to address that problem, evaluating those resources and putting them to effective use.

III. Course Textbook

William B. Badke. *Research Strategies: Finding your Way through the Information Fog*, 3rd edition. Lincoln, NE: Writers Club Press, 2008 (obtainable from the TWU Bookstore or as a PDF from <http://www.iuniverse.com/bookstore/BookDetail.aspx?BookId=SKU-000063139>).

PowerPoint slides from the class are available at <http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/RES500Slides.ppt> .

A flash tutorial on plagiarism is available at: http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf

IV. Course Assignments

Before you begin doing assignments, *be sure that you have activated your TWU e-mail account (mytwu.ca) through the TWU student portal.* For more instruction, click on “Student Resources” in the left column of <http://www.twu.ca/divisions/technology/> and find “Webmail.” Contact the ACTS Admissions office if you don’t already have the necessary user name and password, because this information will be needed to get into many of our databases. You cannot get into these databases until you have activated your TWU e-mail account.

In this course, there will be an assignment due by the beginning of each class except the first and last classes. Each of these assignments will be worth 8% of the course work. Your final paper will be worth 15% and the book review will be worth 5%. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE.**

NOTE: I will be grading by the letter grade system rather than by numeric score. Your marks will be based both on the completeness of each assignment and upon evidence shown of good analytical thinking. Normally a B+ will indicate competent completion, A- or A will indicate excellent completion, and anything less than B+ will indicate that a problem was observed.

A. Assignments Due at Class Time

INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Stay with the same topic throughout.

2. If you do not have an assignment ready at class time, or if you are not present during the class, you will still need to complete the assignment, but you may have your grade reduced.

3. **All assignments, including the final paper and book review, are to be submitted by e-mail. Hard copy is not accepted.** Prof. Badke’s e-mail address is badke@twu.ca

There is an assignment template for each class assignment below at:

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/LBR/Res500templatesFall2009.htm>

Simply select the assignment you need, then copy and paste the template information into your word processor.

The assignments are as follows:

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 2: Read *Research Strategies*, pp. xvii-xviii, 1-14 and answer questions 2-9, 11-12 from the study guide on page 14.

To review the PowerPoint for this class, go here: <http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/newintro.ppt>

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 3: (Read *Research Strategies*, pp. 15-31, 177-187. Indicate in your assignment that this reading has been done.)

1. State a topic for which you are doing a substantial research essay in another course you are taking this semester (or if you are not doing a paper, choose a topic of interest to you).
2. Read enough information from your topic both from a relevant Wikipedia article and from one specialized reference source (not a general encyclopedia like Britannica) to get a working knowledge of it. If you'd like a list of specialized religious reference books in our collection, organized by subject discipline, go to: <http://www.acts.twu.ca/LibraryHandbook.html#REFERENCE>. What similarities / differences did you notice between the Wikipedia article and the article in a more established dictionary or encyclopedia?
3. Summarize in about half a page what you've learned from your reference sources (your working knowledge), *listing the reference sources you used*. This is to be a summary, not an explanation of how you plan to address an issue.
4. List 4-5 possible research questions, in question form, related to the topic, that might be suitable for an essay on the topic. These questions should deal with one aspect of the topic, as narrowly as possible. They should not be easy to answer, nor should they be intended to describe what is already known. Try to make them as analytical as possible.

Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Both reference sources highly relevant to the topic
- ❖ Good working knowledge that includes reference to possible issues or problems that could be addressed
- ❖ All questions are excellent, demanding analysis

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 4: (Read *Research Strategies*, pp. 96-119. Indicate in your assignment that this reading has been done.)

1. Go to the site: <http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/detective/index.html>, the home of the tutorial entitled, The Internet Detective. Do the tutorial, reading all the material and doing all the quizzes. Indicate on your assignment that you have done the above reading, and have completed The Internet Detective.

2. To increase your working knowledge of your topic, do a search on the Internet, using the search engine *Google*. **[Do NOT use Google Scholar at this stage.]** Try to get as focused on your topic as you can by using more than one term. If you want help narrowing your Google search, try using the “advanced features” search at google.com Indicate **what term(s) you used in your search** (e.g. “Bill Gates”, Kingdom Luke), and **3 sites relevant to your research question** (URLs, authors and titles of sites; along with a few lines summarizing the content of each). You should list sites that are of high quality and are actually useful for your narrow research question. For each site you choose, explain why you think it will be helpful and why you think the site is reliable.

3. State the research question you have chosen for the topic you are doing. After the question, separated from it by a space, provide a few sentences of explanation regarding what your goal - want do you want to accomplish with this project? Remember that your project must be analytical, not just descriptive. **Make sure you have only one research question and that it is expressed in one sentence.**

4. Prepare a preliminary outline of your proposed essay (3 or 4 points is fine).

Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Creative and insightful use of terminology to get best results
- ❖ Excellent sites that make a real contribution to the topic are identified.
- ❖ Question is very well formulated and should make a real contribution to subject.
- ❖ Outline shows signs of being an excellent guide for research on the question

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 5: (Read *Research Strategies*, pp. 32-52, 71-76. Indicate in your assignment that this reading has been done.)

NOTE: For this assignment, the catalogue is available at <http://www.twu.ca/library/>. Be sure you do use **title [any word]** only in your searches, not any other kind of search. You will find that title [any word] will search, not just the title words of books, but chapter titles as well, if a table of contents exists in the catalogue record.

State your research question. Indicate if you have modified it.

1. Do a **title [any word]** search for books on the TWU catalogue by:

a. Choosing important words related to your topic, and doing searches by these words either individually or in Boolean combinations. **Indicate the actual searches you tried (e.g. *Luke and Kingdom; (Skinner or behaviorism) and Walden, etc.*)** [You are advised to keep your searches

simple, unless more complexity is demanded, as narrowly focused on your research question as possible (often the best way to do this to use actual words from your research question), and with only a few search combinations instead of many of them.]

b. Listing 12-15 books, **relevant** to your topic, which you identified through your keyword search. Keep as narrowly focused on your research question's goal as possible.

2. Do a short analysis of your searches, answering the following questions:

a. How well do the books you found correspond with your research question? That is, do these books appear to be fully relevant to your question? Which ones are less relevant, and why? Which ones will have a sections (or chapters) that are relevant, though the books look more broadly at the subject than your question does?

b. Which are your most useful keyword combinations?

c. How well can our library book collection meet the need of helping to answer your research question?

The key for this assignment is to find books that as closely as possible provide information that will help you answer your research question. Relevance is very important. If you find that there are no books directly on your question, you will need to identify those books that contain at least a section or chapter dealing with material relevant to your question.

Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Creative and insightful use of terminology to get best results
- ❖ Excellent results that make a real contribution to meeting the needs of thereference question are identified.
- ❖ Is able to troubleshoot issues

FOR THE BEGINNING OF CLASS 6: (Read *Research Strategies*, pp. 53-76 (part of this is repetition). Indicate in your assignment that this reading has been done. **Make sure you understand controlled vocabularies, which are not the same as keywords. This assignment will be returned to you if you have not grasped the “subject heading” concept.** Do not use Subject [any word] if you are searching the catalog. Use Subject [starts with].

State your research question.

1. Take the results of your **title [any word]** search from the previous assignment and look up in the catalogue those titles most relevant to your research question. From the full records for those titles, identify relevant **subject headings** and use those subject headings to search the catalogue.

If you are at all confused about subject heading identification, click on this tutorial:
<http://www.acts.twu.ca/Library/IdentifyingSubjectHeadings.swf>

Alternatively use the large red Library of Congress Subject Headings volumes in the library to identify relevant subject headings, or use the online but less helpful version:
<http://authorities.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?DB=local&PAGE=First>

List all relevant subject headings that you identified.

2. List 12-15 books, **relevant** to your topic, which you identified through your subject heading search. Keep as narrowly focused on your research question's goal as possible. If you found fewer than 12 books for this part of this assignment, or if you struggled with locating the right materials, comment on why you think the difficulty occurred. Here, you need to identify any problems you see in your results – If I identify them instead of you, it could lower your grade.

The key for this assignment, once again, is to find books that as closely as possible provide information that will help you answer your research question. Relevance is very important. You may find that some books are the same as those found in the previous search. That is all right. If you find that there are no books directly on your question, you will need to identify those books that contain at least a section or chapter dealing with material relevant to your question.

Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Creative and insightful use of headings to get best results
- ❖ Excellent results that make a real contribution to meeting the needs of the reference question are identified.
- ❖ Is able to troubleshoot issues

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 7: (Read *Research Strategies*, pp. 76-95. Indicate in your assignment that this reading has been done.)

State your research question. Indicate if you have modified it from last week's version.

1. Do an article search using **two** of the journal databases accessed through the TWU library homepage or one of the terminals in the library. ***Be sure the databases are relevant to your topic, and indicate what databases you used*** (full titles of databases, not just "EBSCO" or "ProQuest"). You **MUST** use subject headings as well as keywords if subject headings are available in your databases and relevant to your searches. **Do not use ERIC at this point.**

If you wish to do well on this assignment, it is strongly recommended that you stage your searches if possible:

Option a. – start with a keyword search and identify “Narrow by subject” or similar options (works best in EBSCO databases where these options are on the left). Click on a relevant subject link.

Option b. - start with a keyword search and open full records of relevant article citations to discover subject headings. Click on the subject heading links that are most relevant.

Option c. – If you have a topic involving a Scripture passage, use the Scriptures link, if available, in the relevant database (ATLA, New Testament Abstracts, Old Testament Abstracts).

2. Indicate what subject terms or keywords you used in your searches. These will tell me if you used lateral thinking and if you formulated your search too broadly. Keep your searches simple, relevant and few (no more than 3 or 4 search word combinations).

3. List 10 articles from each database that are relevant to your topic - author, article title, title of journal, volume number, date, page numbers. **You will be graded on relevance.** Some of the articles in each list may be the same or they may be different.

4. Check the availability of each article. Is it available in full text right within the database you are searching? If not, is it available in our library (in another database or another format)? If so, indicate the database or format in which it will be found.

It is recommended that you download your records into RefWorks to give yourself practice using this bibliographic manager.

Note: Not all databases are relevant to every topic. Our databases are divided by subject discipline to help you with your choice.

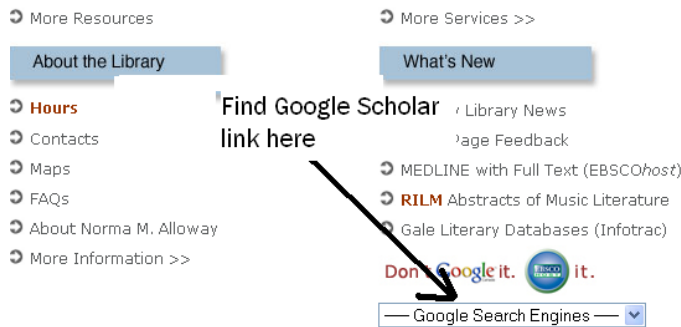
Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Chooses the best two databases for the topic
- ❖ Creative use of terminology, including controlled vocabulary if available
- ❖ Articles are on target to help in addressing the research question.
- ❖ Indicates availability of all articles

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 8: (Read *Research Strategies*, pp. 101-103, 120-135. Indicate in your assignment that this reading has been done.)

1. State your research question. Indicate if you have modified it from the question you submitted last week.

2. Do a search for scholarly journal articles or conference addresses (based on your research question) in Google Scholar. **It is very important that you go to Google Scholar through the library home page so that you can pick up our links to full text. The library home page link will require you to log in.**



List 8 relevant articles, indicating what challenges you faced and which articles were actually available in full text in Google Scholar. For those that were not, check the TWU Library Link (see illustration below) and indicate whether TWU has them. If not, check the TWU Journal List (library home page) to see if these articles are available through the library in some other format (bound or microform). Be aware that Google Scholar includes books, websites, etc. Have a look at the textbook, p. 101-103. You want only journal articles or conference addresses, **not books.**

[Ravens, Lilies, and the Kingdom of God\(Matthew 6: 25-33/Luke 12: 22-31\) - Check TWU Library](#)
 RJ Dillon - The Catholic Biblical quarterly, 1991 - cat.inist.fr
 Ravens, Lilies, and the Kingdom of God(Matthew 6: 25-33/Luke 12: 22-31).
 RJ DILLON The Catholic Biblical quarterly 53:44, 605-627 ...
[Cited by 3](#) - [Related articles](#) - [Web Search](#) - [Import into RefWorks](#)


TWU Library Link

3. Do a search for your topic on ERIC, **using the EBSCO version available through the “Articles” link on the library web page (under “Education.”)** Stage your search, using Narrow by Subject links found to the left of the results after you have done an initial keyword search. List author, title, date and ERIC number for ten ERIC documents, **not ERIC journals,** relevant to your topic.

Note that ERIC works best for social science topics and not at all well for religious studies, history, etc. *If your topic is not suitable for an ERIC search, choose a topic that you think will be suitable and do a search on that topic.*

Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Google Scholar - Competent search terms and relevant results. Identifies availability of full text through Google Scholar and/or TWU library
- ❖ ERIC - Identifies topic that is fully relevant for ERIC. Creative terminology, including controlled vocabulary if available. Documents are mostly on target to help in addressing the research question or stated topic.

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 9

(Read *Research Strategies*, pp. 114-116, 142-143. Indicate in your assignment that this reading has been done.)

A Google search on “Kingdom of God” pulled up the following sites: Please evaluate each carefully, using the leading questions provided:

1. <http://www.ucg.org/> - This is an organization that proclaims the Kingdom of God.

a. When did the organization begin?

b. Is there anything about their belief structure that would cause you to wonder about their theology?

c. Have a look at their history. What tradition did they come from? What happened in 1986, and the years following, that led to the creation of this organization? **You will need to go beyond this website to get objective information on this. You will not find enough information on their site. Hint – investigate the organization out of which they came. NOTE: almost no students find the truth about this group – try to become one of the rare ones who do.**

d. What is your overall impression of this website and the organization it represents?

2. <http://www.gotquestions.org/kingdom-of-God.html> - This is a site that answers religious questions.

a. What are the qualifications of the people answering questions on this site?

b. Who are they? Can you find names, credentials, etc.?

c. What evidences of scholarship do you find on this site?

d. Is their site recognized for tax exempt donation status by the Internal Revenue Service? Would this matter in judging the quality of the answers they provide?

e. What is your overall impression of the reliability and value of this website for answering complex questions about the Kingdom of God?

3. http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=2583 – A study by Dr. Allen Ross

- a. What are Dr. Ross's credentials and how credible are they?
- b. What signs of scholarship are in this work, and how credible do they look?
- c. What is this page part of?
- d. What is your overall impression of the academic quality of this site?

Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Identifies the crucial issues necessary for properly evaluating each site
- ❖ Provides fair, informed evaluation of each site.

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 10: (Read *Research Strategies*, pp. 136-153. Indicate in your assignment that this reading has been done.)

This assignment involves reading and analyzing an article. Use the reading from the textbook as a guide to the kind of analysis needed. You have a choice of articles, all available on the Internet. Choose **only one** of the following:

- Bellinger, Charles K. "The Joker Is Satan, and So Are We: Girard and *The Dark Knight*." *Journal of Religion and Film* 13, no. 1 (April 2009). Available: <http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol13.no1/JokerSatan.htm>
- Haggard, Robert F. "Jack the Ripper As the Threat of Outcast London." *Essays in History* 35 (1993). Available: <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/journals/EH/EH35/haggard1.html> - to get to the footnotes, click on the footnote numbers. (Have a ripping good time.)
- Badke, William. "Was Jesus a Disciple of John?" *Evangelical Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (July 1990): 195-204. Available: http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/eq/disciple_badke.pdf

1. Write a short abstract (summary) of the article (100 words or less). The abstract is not intended to evaluate the article but to explain what the article is saying.
2. State the thesis or research question. If there is none, point out that fact and then suggest what the thesis or question might have been.
3. State the major arguments made related to that thesis or question. Here you need to describe what the author is arguing and what evidence is being presented. Make this section fairly detailed
4. Evaluate the article as follows:
 - a. Is the evidence well presented and sufficient? What causes you to believe it is or is not? Give examples.
 - b. Are there any arguments that seem illogical or any aspects that have been missed? Give examples.
 - c. Does the author stick to the topic well, with a clear sense of purpose? What causes you to believe he or she does or does not?
 - d. Who is the author? What credentials do you see for this author that would cause you to believe he or she is credible (or cause you to doubt this)? You may need to Google the author or check out the website further.
 - e. Are all sides presented fairly? What causes you to believe they are or are not?
5. Give your overall assessment of the value of the article, including your assessment of the article's scholarly quality.

[This assignment should be a minimum of 700 words.](#)

Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Found thesis/question or formulated one if not directly stated (one point)
- ❖ Identified all main arguments with clear insight
- ❖ Showed excellent depth and insight in evaluation
- ❖ Showed excellent insight into strengths / weaknesses of article.

FOR BEGINNING OF CLASS 11: (Read *Research Strategies*; pp. 154-175, 189-206.)

Present a final research question, outline and bibliography (minimum of 25 items, including a minimum of 8 journal articles). You will be assessed on quality of your question, logic of your outline and relevance of your bibliography to your question.

Rubric for an answer achieving full marks:

- ❖ Question is very well formulated and should make a real contribution to subject.
- ❖ Outline shows signs of being an excellent guide for research on question
- ❖ High level of relevance and quality representative of the best material on the topic

B. Final Paper (15%)

Present a copy of the final paper on the topic studied in your class assignments. ***Be sure it contains a good research question or thesis statement.*** You will be marked on your research question, outline, skill in making your case, and on the strength of your bibliography to support your case. Your bibliography would have a minimum of 25 items, including journal articles (8 items minimum). Less than that creates significant grade loss. Normally this will be a paper that you have also submitted in another ACTS course. **[Note: Regardless of the instructions of the professor in the other course, your paper must meet the criteria above.]**

If you have not actually written a paper in another course, turn in a 3 page summary of the paper you might have written on your topic, including a research question, an outline within which you provide your summary, and bibliography (minimum 25 items, with minimum 8 journal articles).

Rubric for a paper achieving a high grade:

- ❖ Research question shows special insight,
- ❖ Both good coverage and great organization
- ❖ Creative and high quality use of arguments
- ❖ Excellent, high quality, well focused bibliography
- ❖ Excellent format (one point)

For bibliographies done with RefWorks, use the Turabian (Notes) version rather than Turabian (Reference List). You may alternatively use APA 5th edition style for counseling papers.

If you are not using RefWorks, you might want to try the KnightCite program at <http://webapps.calvin.edu/knightcite/> (use “Chicago” format, if you want Turabian).

Other formatting help may be found at http://www.twu.ca/library/style_guides.html

DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES FOR THE SEMESTER.

C. Book Review (5%)

Do a one page review of the textbook. Indicate the value of the book to you. No marks will be deducted for negative reviews - I promise. DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES FOR THE SEMESTER.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A+	97-100	4.30
A	93-96	4.00
A-	90-92	3.70
B+	87-89	3.30
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.70
C+	77-79	2.30
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.70
F	Below 70	0.00

Supplement: Important Academic Notes from ACTS

Web Support – Student Portal <https://students.twu.ca>

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. Your student email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

Campus Closure

“In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), STAR FM (107.1 FM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:00 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University’s campus closure notification message box (604-513-2147) and website (<http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>). The first announcement regarding a closure will cover the period up to 10:00 a.m. only. The next update will occur by 10:00 a.m. and cover the period until 3:00 p.m. Students and faculty should assume that all night classes will continue to operate. If the emergency continues into the evening, students and faculty may check for a closure notice on the University’s campus closure notification message box and website after 3:00 p.m. that day.”

Paper Formatting

Students need to adhere to Turabian format except in counselling courses, for which APA format is used.

Students are encouraged strongly to use RefWorks (available through the library home page www.twu.ca/library) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. They will need to be aware of the need to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html or www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Note that in RefWorks the available formatting styles are those of Turabian (Notes), 6th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 5th edition.

Counseling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information found at the following website. <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>.

CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the “student” side. A hard copy is given to incoming students in the fall.

Please check with your professor to see which one he/she recommends you use!!

Research Ethics

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/academics/research/ethics/>. Those needing additional clarification may contact Dr. Bruce Guenther. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire TWU community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at TWU. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. TWU has a strict policy on plagiarism (see academic calendar 2008-09, pp. 37-38). Further details on this subject are contained in the ACTS Student Handbook in section 4.12. The handbook is available online on the ACTS webpage (www.acts.twu.ca) at the following link: www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or used as flash (self running) tutorials of varying lengths from:

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf (8 minute flash tutorial)

Equity of Access

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.