

**\$1000 Excellence in
Scholarship Award:
A Research Paper
Competition**

This competition, which runs from fall 2011 through fall 2012, is open to all full time MSU undergraduates, including those seniors graduating spring semester 2013, when the Committee on American Catholic Thought and Culture announces the winner.

Research papers entered in this competition must analyze some significant aspect of American Catholic Thought and Culture (past or present) from a disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspective.

The \$1000 award, presented as a personal check to the winner, is made possible by an endowment in MSU's College of Arts and Letters established by St. John Church and Student Center, East Lansing, Michigan.

Selecting a Research Topic

Your research paper must examine some significant aspect of American Catholic Thought and Culture, past or present. For example, the winning paper in 2009 was entitled “Rival Conceptions of Just War Theory in the Debate Preceding the Iraq War.” This paper explored a specific topic within the broad research category of American Catholicism and Social Justice. Examples of other appropriate categories from which to derive specific research topics are: American Catholicism and

- Science
- Bioethics
- Social Justice
- Economic Justice
- the Environment
- Electoral Politics
- Human Sexuality
- Education
- Race
- Literature
- Gender
- Immigration
- Art or Music
- Psychology
- Foreign Policy
- Medicine
- Interfaith Relations

Submission Requirements

Send your submissions electronically in Microsoft Word format to Dr. Sam Thomas, Chair of the Committee on American Catholic Thought and Culture, at thomass1@msu.edu.

Every submission must include a copy of a **signed letter of support** written by a professor in your academic discipline or one in whose course the work was done. The letter must state that the professor has read your paper, that it is an original piece of work, and that its quality merits the consideration of the Committee on American Catholic Thought and Culture.

Submissions may be made any time between the end of fall semester, 2011 and the deadline noted below. Results of the competition will be announced during spring semester, 2013.

Preparing your Submission

The **text** of your research paper must be 15-20 pages in length, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and include the following:

- A **cover page** that includes the title of the paper (centered on the page) and your name, PID and date of submission (all in the upper right corner of the page)
- An **abstract** (maximum of 200 words) that concisely states the paper’s thesis and describes its significance or importance for understanding American Catholic Thought and Culture
- A brief **introduction** that concludes with a clearly stated and crafted thesis
- **Endnotes** (not footnotes) formatted according to the standards of your academic discipline

In addition to these structural elements, the Scholarship Committee will also evaluate whether the paper:

- clearly explains the significance or importance of the topic for understanding American Catholic Thought and Culture
- uses supporting arguments based on both primary and secondary source evidence
- acknowledges and addresses opposing arguments or interpretations
- shows sound judgment in choice of facts, details and patterns
- includes a systematic treatment of the topic that also relates it to the broader societal context of the period under study
- demonstrates a thorough understanding of the material
- is thoughtfully organized from introduction to conclusion
- contains carefully written paragraphs and smooth transitions between paragraphs
- exemplifies grammatical correctness and thorough proof reading

Submission Deadline: January 18, 2013