



# GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## THESIS PROPOSAL FORM:

### MASTERS OF DIVINITY & ARTS

**GTS Policy:** M.A. and M.Div. Students with a *GPA of 3.67 or better* are eligible to write a thesis. Upon satisfactory completion of the thesis, and with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.67, a student can graduate with honors (*cum laude*). A thesis candidate will enroll in a 3-credit thesis course in their chosen subject during the Easter term. M.A. and M.Div. thesis courses have a course number of 197 and 198, respectively. (For example, a Church History M.A. Master's thesis would be CH 197.)

**Instructions:** In order to be eligible to write a thesis for the Easter term, a completed copy of this form must be submitted to the Registrar, *with the required signatures and all necessary attachments, by 5 p.m. on the date specified on the Academic Calendar.* (Please see the GTS Thesis Guidelines for further details regarding formatting, etc.).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Draft thesis title: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please attach the following items:*

1. A 100-word thesis statement.
2. An outline of your thesis project.
3. A preliminary bibliography (15 items is suggested).

**NOTE:** A cover page is required when handing the thesis to the first reader. Likewise, your thesis will only be approved for honors on the diploma *if all* requirements are fulfilled, *and* the final product has all required signatures, *and* it is submitted to the Registrar's office on time.

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- I have read and understand the thesis guidelines.
  - My GPA currently matches the requirements, so that I am eligible to write a thesis.
  - I will meet with my Faculty Supervisor or Thesis Advisor three times.
  - I understand that my final thesis must be handed to the Registrar on time in order for me to graduate with honors.
  - I have kept a copy of the Thesis Proposal Form and the Thesis Guidelines for my records.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Advisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Second Reader's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Thesis Guidelines (For M.A. and M.Div. Students)**

(see also "Academic Policies – Thesis, Summative Papers, and Final Projects" in the online Catalog)

- a. maintains an average of at least "A-"; and
- b. submits to the Faculty by April 14 (or on the following Monday, should this date fall on a weekend) of his or her Senior year

***For M.Div., M.A. in Ministry, and M.A. in Spiritual Direction***, an acceptable honors thesis of not less than 8,000 nor more than 15,000 words.

***For M.A. (academic)***, a thesis, summative paper, or project must be about fifty pages.

- i. Theses for Professional Degrees (M.Div, MA-SD, and MA-M) require one reader, though a student and a first reader may elect to invite the contribution of a second reader.
- ii. Two readers are required for each M.A. (academic) thesis, the first reader normally being the student's thesis supervisor, the second being appointed by the Academic Dean in consultation with the supervisor.
- iii. In the event that the two readers are unable to agree about the quality of the thesis a third reader may be appointed.

#### **Organization of Theses, Summative Papers, and Projects:**

Theses, summative papers, and projects constitute academic writing and must conform to the normal standards of academic writing. The thesis must adhere to these standards:

#### **1. Specifications for Theses:**

a. Theses constitute academic writing and must conform to the normal standards of academic writing, including attention to the seminary's inclusive language policy, plagiarism policy, and other relevant policies.

b. The following is the order in which the elements of the thesis are to be placed:

1. Signed Acceptance sheet (for archival copy only)\*
2. Title Page\*
3. Abstract (no more than one page)
4. Table of Contents\*
5. Preface
6. Text\* (divided into at least three Chapters or Sections)
7. Appendices (if any)
8. Bibliography\*
9. Indices
10. Curriculum Vitae

*\*Items are mandatory.*

c. **Format:** In all matters of presentation (including footnotes, bibliography, headings, block quotations, capitalization, and abbreviations), the work should conform to the standards of the current edition of Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013. Also acceptable are modifications suggested by *The SBL Handbook of Style*. Eds. Patrick H. Alexander, et.al., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson 1999.

**d. Reader Copies:** For reader's copies, the thesis should be printed on standard white 8.5 x 11 inch paper and bound per the advisor's request. These copies can be double-sided.

**e. Library Copies:** The library requires two copies for archival purposes. These copies must be single-sided, unbound, and unpunched. They should be printed on 8.5 x 11 inch, white, acid-free thesis paper (i.e. watermarked 20-pound, 100% cotton paper).

**f. Citations:** Citations must be in footnote format, not endnote format. The exception is biblical citations, which may be made after referencing the passage and should be placed in parentheses. E.g. "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." (1 Cor 11:1) or (1 Corinthians 11:1).

**g. Type:** Font size must be 12-point Times New Roman (or other similar font) for the body text, including quotations and headings. Footnotes should be in 10-point Times New Roman (or the same similar font as body text). Appropriate fonts for non-Latin characters (Greek, Hebrew, Coptic, Syriac, Russian, etc.) are acceptable. Contrasting fonts for special purposes may be used with permission of thesis advisor.

**h. Page Format:** The left margin must be 1 ½ inches; all other margins must be at least 1 inch. The body text should be left justified. Chapter titles should be centered. The body text must be double-spaced with the exception of block quotations, which should be single-spaced and indented 1 inch from existing margins (see Turabian).

**i. Numbering:** Page numbers should be centered below the body text and footnotes and conform to body text guidelines in font and size. The body text and footnotes of the thesis together with all appendices, bibliographies, indices, etc. must be numbered with a single sequence of Arabic numerals. Sections before the main text of the thesis must be separately paginated in lower-case Roman numerals.

**j. Footnotes:** Footnotes must be separated from the body text by a 2 to 3 inch left-justified line. They must be numbered consecutively through each chapter. Numbering should either be continuous through the whole thesis or start again with each new chapter. Footnotes should begin at the bottom of the page on which the reference is found, continuing if necessary to the bottom of the next page. Footnotes should be single-spaced and not indented on the first line.

**k.** Any exceptions to this formatting must be cleared with the student's thesis advisor, the registrar, and the Keller Library staff.

***Thesis Guidelines Checklist:***

\_\_\_ Submit a completed Thesis Proposal Form (drafted in consultation with your Faculty Supervisor or Thesis Advisor) to the Registrar's Office by the end of business on **the date specified on the academic calendar**. A bibliography and outline should be included.

\_\_\_ Meet with Faculty Supervisor or Thesis Advisor **at least 3 times** before submission of the completed draft:

— First Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

— Second meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

— Third meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Must present *at least* one section of a preliminary draft to your Faculty Supervisor or Thesis Advisor by **the end of February**.

\_\_\_ Submit a Reader Copy to each reader no later than **the first Friday of April**. The readers are to provide their edits to the student no later than April 21.

\_\_\_ Submit two (2) Library Copies of the final thesis (one of which is the archival copy), complete with all elements and signatures, to the Registrar by 5:00 p.m. on **the last Friday of April**. They will be delivered to the library by the Registrar.