

Guidelines for the M.T.S. Thesis

PART I

The Quick Procedure Checklist:

1. Selecting the field of study
2. Selecting a topic for the M.T.S. Thesis
3. Determining the literature to be researched and the broad structure of the Thesis.
4. Wording a thesis statement
5. Naming the Thesis (title)
6. Selecting a Thesis Supervisor
7. Submitting the Proposal Form
8. Asking the Faculty to appoint a Reader
9. Consulting with the Thesis Supervisor during the process of research and writing
10. Preparing the final draft
11. Binding the manuscripts
12. Submitting the M.T.S. Thesis in two copies on the agreed due date
13. Scheduling the Presentation of the Thesis
14. Presenting the M.T.S. Thesis
15. Grading of the M.T.S. Thesis
16. Submitting the final, corrected and bound copy of the Thesis to the Library together with a one-page *Abstract*.

1. Selecting the Field of Study

First determine your area of interest. Think about the topic's usefulness to your current or future ministry and for your own spiritual and theological edification and concerns.

2. Selecting a topic for the M.T.S. Thesis

Limit your interest down to a manageable topic, so that it would be possible to analyze and present it in 30 pages. Choose a topic that you will be deeply interested in for at least a year, that is, while you are researching and writing your M.T.S. Thesis.

3. Determining the literature to be researched and the broad structure of the Thesis.

- Figure out what and how much you have to read and whether you have access to this material. Selecting relevant and beneficial literature saves you much time. Do not waste your energy for reading the uncountable unnecessary tomes! Ask advice about what to read!
- Think through the structure of your Thesis (what to say, how many chapters, in which order to present the material, where to begin and where to end, etc.)

4. Wording a thesis statement.

Put your Thesis into one sentence, a thesis statement. It has to convey your topic (i.e., the issue to be studied), assertion(s) (i.e., what are you going to say about it), and contribution (i.e., the usefulness of doing it). Do not forget to include the thesis statement into your Thesis! Make a case for your thesis—in fact, that is your Thesis!

5. Naming the Thesis

The title of the Thesis should not be a mere eye-catcher. Use especially the subtitle to indicate the topic of your Thesis. For instance: *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*

6. Selecting a Thesis Supervisor

A student starting a M.T.S. Thesis is supposed to select a Thesis Supervisor in the area in which he/she plans to do research. If the Faculty of the Leland Center does not include a specialist in the chosen field or topic, an outside Supervisor may be considered. If this is the case, the appointed Reader must be a Professor at the Leland Center.

- Be acquainted with the academic background, professional experience, and areas of research interests of your Thesis Supervisor.
- Find a scholar, who has an expertise in the field or topic of your Thesis.
- The best possible supervisor is not necessarily your “favorite” professor. The best possible supervisor is the one who can guide you through your research.
- Find a Thesis Supervisor whose work habits match with yours. Some supervisors prefer to be engaged in every step of your research/writing, others would encourage a more independent approach.

7. Submitting a Proposal Form

The Proposal Form is available at the website of the Leland Center. Fill out the form (two copies), get the signatures, and hold on to this document.

8. Asking the Faculty to appoint a Reader.

After the Proposal Form is submitted, ask the Faculty of the Leland Center to appoint a Reader. The Reader is selected on the basis of his/her competency in the proposed Thesis topic.

9. Consulting with the supervisor during the process of research and writing

After submitting the Proposal Form, you know, more or less, what to do. If you bump to any problems, ask your Thesis Supervisor. If you have finished writing any significant section of your Thesis, consult with your Supervisor and consider his/her suggestions seriously. However, please keep in mind that it is you and not your Supervisor who is writing the Thesis. The work-load has to be on your shoulders. The Thesis Supervisor is also a grader, and it is *your* work that will be graded.

10. Preparing the final, corrected draft

It is a time consuming but necessary phase of your Thesis. Make absolutely sure that your Thesis is properly formatted, without spelling mistakes, and professional in every respect. Again, it is better to ask for advice *before* submitting the Thesis than to deal with the consequences of its rejection.

11. Binding the manuscripts

The two manuscripts that you are required to submit have to be bound. Use the inexpensive spiral binding at Kinko's.

12. Submitting the M.T.S. Thesis in two copies

- Out of the two bound copies of your M.T.S. Thesis, one for the Thesis Supervisor, and one for the Reader.
- If the deadline is not met for significant reasons, the student can re-negotiate a new submission date *once* without any penalty.

13. Scheduling the Presentation of the Thesis

- After the Thesis has been submitted, negotiate a date for your presentation of the Thesis (i.e., the defense). Please, keep in mind that the Academic Dean, the Thesis Supervisor, and the reader have to be present at the presentation of the Thesis.
- **NB!** The oral defense cannot be earlier than **two weeks** after the submission of the Thesis. This will allow sufficient time for the Thesis Supervisor and the Reader to study your Thesis.

14. Presenting of the M.T.S. Thesis

1. The date of your defense will be posted. The presentation of the Thesis is open to all whom the student invites (e.g., fellow students, parents, friends, pastor, etc.).
2. The Academic Dean, the Thesis Supervisor, and the Reader must be present at the presentation of the Thesis.
3. The oral defense should not extend beyond 30 minutes.
4. The presentation should include:
 - Brief introduction of the Thesis.
 - Mentioning of the thesis, the results of your research, and your contribution.
 - Answering the questions of the examining Committee (The Academic Dean, Thesis Supervisor, and the Reader).

15. Grading of the M.T.S. Thesis

- At the conclusion of the oral presentation of the M.T.S. Thesis, the three Committee members must reach a consensus on the performance of the student, on the quality of the Thesis, and they have to grade it accordingly.
- In the (unlikely) event of failure of the Thesis presentation, a written exam may be given or the Committee may suggest other remedial measures.

16. Submitting the final, corrected and bound copy of the Thesis to the Library

- Please make the final corrections, suggested by your Thesis Supervisor and Reader, to your Thesis.
- Submit a clean and bound copy to the Library of John Leland Center. **NB!** Full credit for your work cannot be given before our Library has a copy of your defended work.
- Make another similar copy for your own files.
- Please, attach a one-page *Abstract* to the final bound copy of your Thesis. The *Abstract* should introduce and summarize your work. It should state the title of your Thesis, your thesis, a description of procedure, and your contribution.

PART II

Responsibilities of the Academic Dean

- To validate that the student has successfully fulfilled or is in the process of fulfilling all of the requirements for the degree.
- To review, approve, and sign the M.T.S. Thesis Proposal Form.
- To chair the presentation of the M.T.S. Thesis.
- To grade the M.T.S. Thesis in discussion with the Thesis Supervisor and the Reader.

Responsibilities of the Thesis Supervisor

The Thesis Supervisor can be a member of the Faculty of the Leland Center or, alternatively, an outside Supervisor, if he/she has the necessary qualifications.

- To help the student in preparing the M.T.S. Proposal Form.
- To ensure that the proposal is editorially and intellectually sound.
- To offer, when called upon by the student, their particular expertise throughout the process of research and writing.
- To respond to the draft of the Thesis with suggestions.
- To be present at the presentation of the Thesis.
- To grade the Thesis in discussion with the Academic Dean and the Reader.

Responsibilities of the Reader

If the Thesis Supervisor is from outside the Leland Center, the Reader *must* be a member of the Faculty of the Leland Center. If the Thesis Supervisor is a professor at the Leland Center, the Reader may be an outside Reader, if he/she has the necessary qualifications. **NB!** The Reader is appointed by the Faculty of the Leland Center before the submission of the Thesis Proposal Form.

- To read and evaluate the M.T.S. Thesis
- To be present at the presentation of the Thesis.
- To grade the Thesis in discussion with the Academic Dean and the Thesis Supervisor

Responsibilities of the Faculty

- To appoint the Reader for the M.T.S. Thesis before the Thesis Proposal Form is submitted.

Responsibilities of Student

- To figure out the topic, thesis, title, bibliography, structure, and a brief outline of the M.T.S. Thesis.
- To select a Thesis Supervisor.
- To ask the Faculty of the Leland Center to appoint a Reader.
- To submit and sign the M.T.S. Thesis Proposal Form.
- To do the research and write the Thesis.
- To consult the Thesis Supervisor during the process of writing the Thesis.

- To format the Thesis according to the style guide. Poorly formatted Thesis will be returned to the student and will not be re-read until it is re-submitted in an acceptable form. This can be costly in terms of time and may interfere seriously with the student's planned time-line for finishing the degree.
- To assure that any improvements have been completed before the manuscript is bound.
- To submit the Thesis on the agreed date.
- To schedule the Thesis presentation.
- To meet the deadline(s).
- To bear all necessary related mailing and printing costs.
- To bear the cost of binding the copies of the final manuscript.
- To present the Thesis.
- To submit a corrected copy to the Library, together with an *Abstract*.