

Religion Division MA Thesis Proposal Guidelines (Draft)

All candidates for the Master of Arts in Religion are required to successfully complete and orally defend a thesis to receive their degree. No student should undertake a thesis without first having their thesis proposal approved by their entire thesis committee. This document contains specific guidelines pertaining to thesis proposals submitted within the Religion Division. This is a general outline for the components that should be clearly laid out within a student's thesis proposal. The student is responsible for communicating with their thesis advisor and committee regarding additional requirements for their specific proposal.

Thesis Expectations

It is expected that the thesis for the master's degree will be an original research that makes a contribution to scholarship in the student's particular field. The thesis should attempt to establish the validity of a theological claim, argument, or interpretation by assembling the appropriate evidence (biblical, historical, theological, etc.) and by articulating persuasively the warrants that support the student's analysis of this evidence.

Thesis Proposal Components

A proper proposal should attend to the following matters or features:

Title: Students do not need to submit a cover page but should have a title for their project.

Introduction: general statement of the theological issue to be investigated.

Thesis Statement or Statement of Problem: a statement of the claim or problem that is to be explored by the project and an explanation of the relevance or importance of this claim or problem.

Design of Study: a description of the methods and procedures to be used in establishment of the thesis claims.

Working Bibliography: a list of all bibliographic information relating to sources used during research and writing of the proposal.

Submission

Students will submit their thesis proposal to their committee members for approval a minimum of one semester prior to their defense, and no later than Dec. 1st or the agreed upon deadline established by their committee.

For information regarding proposal approval and the thesis process students should refer to the M.A. Religion Thesis Overview document.