

## **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. 1<sup>st</sup> 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.*