

Working draft. Last revised 11/27/12 (GES), only updated university name. Asterisks mark items that need to be spelled out.

INTRODUCTION

The master's thesis needs to demonstrate graduate level mastery on a subject of choice through a writing project. The student should begin by discussing a thesis topic with a potential thesis advisor, and make plans for completing the necessary research.

The thesis process itself, outlined below, assumes the student has already completed all, or nearly all, of the necessary research. Thus, prior to enrolling in the thesis the student will typically take a three credit hour independent reading course to be completed under the potential thesis advisor's guidance, or be able to show research already completed through research paper(s) completed in graduate level course(s). The student should have successfully completed courses on the biblical languages before enrolling in the thesis.

The assignment of thesis advisor, and acceptance of thesis proposal and final draft are subject to approval by the dean over the master of divinity program.

I DUE DATES (Due on Monday if deadline falls on a weekend.)

	Fall completion	Spring completion
Proposal	September 1	February 1
Draft First Chapter (or first main chapter if introduction needs to be written last)	October 1	March 1
First Draft	November 10	April 10
Final Draft	December 5	May 5

(Thesis may only be completed during summer by special arrangement.)

II FEES

- A * [cost of library reading for style]
- B Outside readers (if applicable) \$150.00. (An outside second reader may be needed due to subject matter, or for other reasons as determined by the thesis advisor.)
- C The cost of filing two copies of the final draft of the thesis in the library, one for archives and one in circulation \$30.00 (as of 2009 [subject to increase]). As a courtesy, the student may also have one or more personal copies of the thesis bound by the library at present cost per volume. If the completion of the binding is after the student graduates, the student needs to pay postage and make arrangements with the M.Div. administrative assistant (address to which the bound thesis should be sent).
- D The copies of corrected final draft of the thesis provided to the library must be printed by a laser printer on acid-free white paper.

III STYLE

- A The thesis must conform to the style guidelines of the publications of the Society of Biblical Literature, as adapted for student papers (this is industry standard for academic biblical studies in North America). There are a few corrections,

exceptions, and modifications to these guidelines which are noted below. The student should carefully read and consult the following resources.

- 1 Patrick H. Alexander et al., eds., *The SBL Handbook of Style, For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999). This title is on reserve in the library, and an electronic version is available upon request.
- 2 Joel M. LeMon, ed., "Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook of Style*," unpublished paper, Sept 2004. This title is available upon request.
- 3 The student should consult recent issues of the *Journal of Biblical Literature* in the library for models of correct style, particularly in difficult cases.

B The following are the required corrections, exceptions, and modifications to the above guidelines.

- 1 The margins must be one and one quarter inches for the left, and one inch for top, bottom, and right (*contra* "Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook of Style*," 2.1).
- 2 The "second-level subheading" is stated correctly in "Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook of Style*," 2.6, but is illustrated incorrectly in 3.3.
- 3 When the same source is cited in consecutive footnotes the second, third, and so on, should use "ibid." Example:
 - ¹ Smith, *Selected Discourses*, 333.
 - ² Ibid., 363.
 - ³ See *ibid.*, 365-370.
- 4 Biblical citations using the original languages should be in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek; not transliterated unless called for by the point being made (for other details see "Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook of Style*," 1.7).
- 5 The use of abbreviations for standard reference works and the like, versus full citations is at the discretion of the thesis advisor (see *SBL Handbook of Style* for abbreviations). In the case that abbreviations are used thesis must have a table of all abbreviations (as opposed to the "Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook of Style*," 1.5 which only calls for a table of abbreviations not in *The SBL Handbook of Style*).

C Other submission requirements

- 1 (a) The proposal is generally submitted in MicrosoftWord unless specified otherwise by the thesis advisor. (b) The draft first chapter is generally submitted in MicrosoftWord unless specified otherwise by the thesis advisor. (c) Two copies of the first draft are submitted, first, in MicrosoftWord unless specified otherwise by the thesis advisor, and second, in hard copy to the thesis advisor for the library style reader. (d) The final draft is submitted in hard copy, at least two copies, to thesis advisor. The final draft must be submitted as noted in II C and D above.
- 2 The required font of the text is Times New Roman, 12 point for text and 10 point for footnotes.

- 3 Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic should be typed using BibleWorks language fonts unless specified otherwise by the thesis advisor.
- 4 The length of the thesis should be forty to sixty pages. Theses beyond sixty pages need to be approved.

IV PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

The proposal should be specific and clearly written. Proposal must include all of the following to be accepted: (1) A statement by the student indicating that she or he has read *The SBL Handbook of Style* and “Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook of Style*” (see above); (2) List advisor and suggestions for second reader or outside second reader; (3) Proposed title; (4) Brief description of the thesis (one or two paragraphs)—this should include a guess at what kinds of conclusions the thesis is expected to find (these may be refined later); (5) An outline of the thesis chapters. The proposal is generally submitted in MicrosoftWord unless specified otherwise by the thesis advisor.

Evaluation process: Approval by thesis advisor, and then approval by the dean. Advisor and dean confer regarding selection of second reader.

V DRAFT FIRST CHAPTER SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Draft of first chapter must include all of the following to be accepted: (1) Title page; (2) Table of contents; (3) First chapter; (4) Bibliography. All of these need to be in proper form (see information on style above). The draft first chapter is generally submitted in MicrosoftWord unless specified otherwise by the thesis advisor.

Evaluation process: Assessment by thesis advisor including feedback on content and direction, as well as feedback regarding form. Student must meet with advisor to discuss the draft first chapter. Second reader should read draft first chapter with thesis advisor’s comments on it, and student should meet with second reader for feedback.

VI FIRST DRAFT SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

First Draft of entire thesis must include all of the following to be accepted: (1) Title page; (2) Table of contents; (3) All chapters; (4) Bibliography; (5) Draft first chapter with advisor’s comments. All of these need to be in proper form (see information on style above). Two copies of the first draft are submitted, first, in MicrosoftWord unless specified otherwise by the thesis advisor, and second, in hard copy to the thesis advisor for the library style reader.

Evaluation process: Thesis advisor sends hard copy to library reader for style evaluation. Assessment by thesis advisor including feedback regarding content, structure, and style. Student must meet with advisor. Second reader should read first draft with thesis advisor’s comments on it, and student should meet with second reader.

VII FINAL DRAFT SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Final Draft must include all of the following to be accepted: (1) Title page; (2) Table of contents; (3) All chapters revised according to comments and feedback on first draft, including all needed style changes; (4) Bibliography; and (5) First draft with advisor’s and second reader’s comments on it.

Evaluation process: Thesis advisor evaluates to see that necessary changes have been made. Second reader approves and provides written feedback to thesis advisor. Dean approves acceptance of thesis pending corrections. Student makes any final corrections which need to be made. The corrected final draft is submitted in hard copy, at least two copies, to thesis advisor. The final draft must be submitted as noted in II C and D above.