



Before Writing Your Thesis

1. M.Div. and M.T.S. students must have a B+ average overall, as well as B+ in the area of research/specialization (BS, CC, CT, CW, PC, PS).
2. Students must have completed a substantial portion of the course load in their degree before submitting the proposal: M.T.S (27 units), or M.Div. (54 units).
3. Students must meet with their faculty advisor to discern an appropriate supervisor in the preferred area of emphasis by the end of the fall semester.
4. Approval must be received from both the supervisor and the Academic Dean's Office before the proposal may be submitted for faculty approval.

Proposing Your Thesis

1. Craft the Proposal (normally during the Winter Semester):
 - a. Meet with supervisor to discuss initial thoughts for the thesis and receive guidance on the topic and process;
 - b. Be familiar with the thesis proposal application;
 - c. Begin to read in the area and identify a particular area of interest;
 - d. Identify the thesis statement, potential basic argument, outline of the thesis, and bibliography;
 - e. Submit the proposal with adequate lead time to allow the supervisor to review the proposal prior to the April 15th deadline.
2. Submit the thesis proposal to the **Registrar no later than April 15** of the academic year prior to the writing of the thesis. A thesis proposal may be submitted at any time, but to ensure beginning to write in the fall semester the proposal must be submitted by April 15. The faculty will review thesis proposals at their May meeting. The faculty may accept the proposal with or without revisions, or may reject the proposal. Usually the faculty will find areas that need some revision before writing can begin. If the April 15 deadline is not met, the faculty will not consider the proposal until their September meeting, the deadline for that meeting being Aug 15.
3. Register for the thesis in the following (normally fall) semester (if proposal approved).

N.B. The thesis must be completed within two semesters (with the possibility of a one-semester extension).

Researching and Writing Your Thesis

1. One semester is devoted to reading, writing, and submitting the initial draft of each chapter to the first reader (supervisor). The thesis is to be 25,000 words (+/- 10%) and is worth 6 units. For specific guidelines see the MDC Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses. Arrangements should be made to have regular meetings with the supervisor.
2. The completed draft of the **thesis manuscript** should be submitted **to the first reader by January 31**.

3. The month of **February** should be dedicated to **further revisions and rewriting**, as indicated by the first reader.
4. By **March 1**, submit **three copies of the final thesis** manuscript to the Office of the Academic Dean. A copy will be forwarded to the first reader, the second reader, and chair.

N.B. Students unable to meet these deadlines may request one extension of one semester to complete the thesis. The student will convocate in May of the following year.

Defending Your Thesis

1. The Registrar, in consultation with the first reader, second reader and chair (Academic Dean or Designate), will schedule the oral defence sometime between March 15 and the last day of class for the winter semester. Guests may attend as observers, with permission from the first reader.
2. In this meeting you will be called upon to orally defend what you have written in your thesis. The meeting will be chaired by the Academic Dean or designate. You will be asked to give a short presentation (10-15 minutes) summarizing the basic argument and conclusions of your thesis. Then questions will be asked by both the first and second readers. You will be given an opportunity for a closing statement. Expect the defence to last about 1-1½ hours.
3. You and any guests will leave the room and the readers will evaluate your thesis based on both written and oral components. The committee will recommend one of five outcomes:
 - a. Pass – with or without minor corrections;
 - b. Pass – with minor revisions;
 - c. Pass – with major revisions* – with specified time limit for resubmission;
 - d. Pass – with major revisions* – with specified time limit for resubmission and new defence;
 - e. Fail – with no option of rewrite.

The designation of “pass” may be accorded the additional notation “with distinction.”

4. Once the committee has come to a resolution on evaluation you will be invited back into the room to hear the result.

*** Students who receive the outcome of “Pass - with major revisions” will normally not convocate until May of the following year, provided thesis is successfully completed (and/or defended as required).**

N.B. Students should ensure they have time set aside between the defence and the final date for grade submission in order to make corrections and/or revisions (whether minor or major); *these must be made in order to graduate.*

Binding Procedures

Guidelines for preparing the thesis for binding can be found in the MDC Style Guide.