



Note: Before writing the thesis proposal, students should review the policies and procedures governing the writing of master's theses. The proposal should also include Research Ethics Board application for any qualitative research involving human subjects.

Instructions: Students in the MA (Christian Studies) program should create their thesis proposal based on the following template. The proposal must be 3,000–4,000 words in length (including bibliography) to support a dissertation of 40,000 words. This proposal is to be developed by the student in consultation with the student's primary supervisor, who will review and approve the proposal before it proceeds to the faculty for consideration and approval.

Criteria for Evaluation and Approval

In order to receive approval by majority vote of faculty, the proposal document must:

- A. Provide, in full, all information requested below;
- B. Include a thesis statement that articulates the anticipated findings or outcome of the research in a clear and concrete fashion (as distinct, for instance, from announcing a general intention to "examine" or "explore" the subject area in question);
- C. Indicate sufficient familiarity with the relevant primary and secondary literature, demonstrating an awareness of the history of research and its bearing on the thesis;
- D. Demonstrate the heuristic adequacy of the proposed methodological model or critical approach by delineating the specific procedures to be followed;
- E. Lay out the stages of investigation in logical sequence and indicate the manner in which each chapter of the dissertation contributes to the argument as a whole;
- F. Be free from errors of grammar and spelling, and conform in full to all requirements of the most recent edition of the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guide*.

Proposal documents that do not meet these requirements will be returned to the student for revision prior to further consideration.

- I. Please provide the following information on the cover page (in place of a title page):

APPLICATION TO WRITE A MA THESIS

A. Student Information

1. Student Name and ID number
2. Degree Program MA (Christian Studies), year of entry into the program
3. Date of submission
4. Date of projected submission of thesis

B. Program Progress

1. Courses (name of course, semester taken, grade)
 - a. Research Methods:
 - b. Interdisciplinary Seminar #1:
 - c. Courses in area of emphasis:
 - i.
 - ii.
 - iii.
 - iv.
2. Language requirements (name of language, exam/course, date, pass/fail)
 - a. Ancient Language(s):

C. Supervisory Committee

1. Primary Supervisor:
2. Secondary Supervisor (to be assigned):
3. External Supervisor (to be assigned, if needed):

D. Dissertation Proposal

1. Proposed title:
2. Thesis statement:
3. Proposal wordcount:

E. Approvals

Approved by Primary Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Approved by Secondary Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Approved by Faculty (VP Academic or designate): _____ Date: _____

- II. Beginning with a new page provide this information:

PROPOSED TITLE

Description of Topic and Its Importance

This section will describe the proposed research field and its importance, set in the context of the history of research. This section must end with a clear thesis statement which sets out in brief form the precise proposition or hypothesis that your project will seek to demonstrate and the original contribution your project will make to the research field.

Research Methodology and Procedure

This section will provide the research methodology, investigative model, and/or theoretical framework for the dissertation, describing the past development of this methodology/ model/framework, its importance to the particular research field, its usefulness for generating and verifying the conclusions reached in the dissertation, and the specific manner of its implementation.

Outline/Structure of the Dissertation

This section will provide an account of the projected organization of the thesis and include a description of each chapter. The relationship between chapters should also be indicated, so as to explain the logical development of the argument as a whole.

Work Plan/Timeline

This section will provide a concise description of the proposed procedure for the development of your dissertation with a preliminary schedule for research and writing. This may not follow the outline of the thesis, but rather the proposed order of research.

Preliminary Bibliography

This section comprises 20–30 sources directly relevant to the thesis. MDC Style Guide should be observed throughout.