



Methodist Theological School in Ohio

# THESIS PROJECT PROPOSAL

M.DIV. & MTS STUDENTS

*Note: Attach additional pages as required. Petitions with insufficient information, detail, or precision will be denied.*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Term/year of proposed study \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Initial

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

MTS concentration or M.Div. specialization \_\_\_\_\_

GPA \_\_\_\_\_ # Credits hours (3 or 6) \_\_\_\_\_ Classical division credit needed? \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher to pursue the thesis option.

**THESIS TITLE** \_\_\_\_\_

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

\_\_\_\_\_

**FACULTY SUPERVISOR** \_\_\_\_\_

**SECOND READER** (named by the Academic Dean) \_\_\_\_\_

### ADDITIONAL ATTACHED PAGES WILL BE NECESSARY FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Description of the research project** (e.g., proposed development of the project, a preliminary outline of the issues, specific areas of study, must be 600-900 words in length)
- Bibliography** (In the process of research, additional bibliography will most likely be added to this initial listing. This initial bibliography, however, should identify foundational sources. The quality of the bibliography is one of the primary indicators that the student is ready to begin such a research project.)

**Student's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved by: Faculty Supervisor** (for thesis) \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Academic Dean** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

### (GUIDELINES ON PAGE 2)

Please return this form with all necessary signatures to the Office of Academic Affairs (W-121) or [academicaffairs@mtso.edu](mailto:academicaffairs@mtso.edu)

**THESIS GUIDELINES (TH-800)**

Students in the Master of Theological Studies or Master of Divinity degree program with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.3 may elect to complete a thesis. MTS students are required to choose between writing a thesis or taking a comprehensive exam. The thesis course (TH-800) is three or six semester hours and may count as three hours in the MTS area of concentration. Students must complete the "Proposal for Master's Thesis Project" in conjunction with their advisor. Students may not register for thesis until it has been approved by the dean.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the thesis project is to provide an opportunity for the student to engage in serious research in a focused area: to develop, in consultation with a faculty advisor, a research strategy, to demonstrate a mastery of some of the major sources and of significant issues in that area of study, and to articulate a coherent summary of that work with reasoned conclusions drawn from the study. It assumes previous concentrated study in the area of specialization. The student will work with a primary faculty supervisor in the course of the study. In addition, the completed thesis will be reviewed by a second reader. The thesis is graded pass/fail. A cumulative GPA of at least 3.3 is required for participation in this program.

**Proposal:** The general topic for the thesis should normally be identified in the second semester (MTS) or early in the second year (M.Div.) thereby allowing the student to structure future classes around that topic (whenever possible). In any case, the topic must be identified early in the semester prior to enrolling for the thesis course. The form for the thesis proposal can be obtained from the Office of Academic Affairs. Proposals are normally 600-900 words in length. A significant part of the proposal is the proposed bibliography (not included in the word count). A thesis proposal must be approved by the faculty thesis supervisor, the student's faculty advisor, and the dean, and submitted to Academic Affairs one week before the beginning of the term during which the student is enrolled for the thesis. At the time of approval, the dean will assign a secondary reader, list that person on the form, and notify the student and the thesis supervisor of the selection. Copies of the approved proposal will be sent to the student, the supervisor and the secondary reader.

**Length and format:** A three credit hour thesis will normally be 12,000 to 15,000 words in length (double-spaced), including citations and bibliography. If the thesis is being done for six credit hours, the word count will be 24,000 to 30,000. The thesis is to be presented in Arial or Times New Roman font, 12 point, with the left margin 1.5 inches and all other margins 1 inch. Page numbers should be placed top right. Footnotes are to be used (not endnotes or in-text notes). The formatting of footnotes and bibliography should conform to the latest *Chicago Manual of Style*. The thesis should include a title page, an approval page for the signatures of the primary and secondary readers and the dean, table of contents, at least section headings, and full bibliography of works cited. A signature page template is available from Academic Affairs.

**Timeline and consultation with the thesis supervisor:** The thesis supervisor will provide the student with a timeline to follow. If the thesis work is confined to one semester, the process of defining the topic and developing the proposal usually occurs in the fall, with actual thesis registration in the following spring semester. If the thesis work is designated for 6 credit hours (normally 2 semesters), registration should occur in the spring for the following fall. Normally the student will consult with the supervisor at least four times in the process of research and writing. Additional meetings may be scheduled, as well as conversations with the secondary reader or other faculty--as faculty are able and willing.

**Thesis colloquium:** Approximately two weeks after submitting a finished draft of the thesis the student will schedule a colloquium with the two readers. (Others may be invited by the students, at his/her choice.) This is not to be understood as a "defense" of the thesis, since the assumption is not that original work will have been produced. It is intended to provide an opportunity for the student to discuss the work of the term and the thesis itself with faculty (and others), as a way to provide a fitting closure to the process.

**Completion dates:** A penultimate draft (i.e., a finished project, though still open to minor additions and/or changes) must be in the hands of the readers no later than three weeks before the end of the term in which the student anticipates graduation. The thesis colloquium will be scheduled by the student with the two readers normally during the last week of the term.

Following approval by the primary and secondary readers and the dean, the student will present an unbound and signed copy of the thesis to the director of the MTSO Library, along with payment for binding services.

Please return this form with all necessary signatures to the Office of Academic Affairs (W-121) or [academicaffairs@mtso.edu](mailto:academicaffairs@mtso.edu)