

Thesis and Project Instructions

M.A. and M.Div.

November 2019

OVERVIEW

The thesis for Master of Arts (M.A.) students is a written work and is a requirement of the degree. Master of Divinity (M.Div.) students may choose to do a final project, which is different from a traditional academic essay and can include a presentation, but does include a written component. **MA students are strongly encouraged to register for the Thesis Seminar courses, UT 150 (Fall) and UT 151 (Spring).**

A thesis (MA) or written component of a final project (M.Div.) must show academic rigor, good research, plus the development and understanding of the material covered, and relevant technical competency. The thesis/final project should represent your original work and, except for direct quotations, it must be in your own words. Plan, research, and write your thesis/final project in regular consultation with your faculty readers/supervisors, particularly the primary faculty.

M.A. Thesis: The exact length of the work is not specified; fifty pages of content (approximately 12,000 words) is normally satisfactory. The length should be determined by achieving an adequate treatment of the subject. If the topic cannot be covered adequately in about fifty pages, sharpen the issue or the question that is to be treated in your work, in consultation with your readers.

M.Div. Project: The presentation or project must be supported by a documentation of your purpose, sources, and methodology. In some instances, an evaluation of the project might be requested from the project supervisor after completion of the project. You may also write an essay, of approximately the same length as a thesis (fifty pages), espousing and developing a theological position and documenting its sources. The final project may focus on one or integrate two or more fields of study. In all cases, the project must include a written academic paper of approximately twelve to twenty pages.

DEADLINES/MILESTONES

View the **Academic Calendar** accessible from Registrar webpage [here](#) for exact dates.

September/October: Begin thinking about your thesis/project especially **readers/ supervisors**. Approach faculty that you are interested in having serve as your thesis readers/project supervisors and have a discussion about your topic area. **Written confirmation directly from the faculty readers/supervisors must be obtained**, email acceptable.

End of November:

1. Complete and save this [Proposal Template](#) (Word document) and submit to your readers/supervisors.
2. Once the **Proposal** is approved, save to your ePortfolio.
3. Complete this [Thesis Approval](#) (M.A.) or [Project Approval](#) (M.Div.) which gets submitted to the Registrar's Office who then confirms with the readers/supervisors.



Mid-January:

Formal **thesis only** – send outline and preliminary *annotated* bibliography to 1) readers/supervisors, 2) academics@utsnyc.edu, and 3) upload to ePortfolio.

Early April:

1. Submit final work to both readers in whichever preferred format they request (printed or emailed PDF/Word document). **No extension permissible for expected graduates.**
2. Email PDF of final work to academics@utsnyc.edu.
3. Upload final work to ePortfolio.

GENERAL THESIS/PROJECT GUIDELINES

The paper should be written in a standard, double-spaced, twelve-point font with one-inch margins; footnotes should be formatted in ten-point font. In the paper, indicate **short quotations** (no more than two sentences) by quotation marks; indicate **long quotations** (three or more sentences) with 0.5-inch indentation on right and left margins, single-spacing, and eleven-point font. Provide the source of every quotation, item of evidence, or citation of opinion you use, according to standard reference forms. Obtaining permission to use specific material, when that is necessary, is of course your responsibility. Documentation and attribution of all sources used are standard academic requirements.

Observe the highest standard in using correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. Follow consistent format and typography found in a generally recognized style manual. Footnotes and references, should appear at the bottom of the appropriate pages, or at the end of each chapter, or just before the bibliography.

Whichever style/format you choose, follow it consistently. Recommended manuals include Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* and the *Chicago Manual of Style*. There are many editions of these and other suitable manuals. Strunk and White's popular *The Elements of Style* is a useful book, but it is not a style book. Many of these manuals are available in the Burke Library and local bookstores.

The thesis must include a **table of contents** that gives an outline of the treatment and also a list of charts, graphs, or illustrations if applicable. The bibliography at the end of the work must list all the books and articles used throughout the thesis. The bibliography may be arranged alphabetically, chronologically, or topically. In each entry, give the author's name, exact title of the book, and the place and date of publication. In the case of articles in periodicals, or single chapters in books, etc., give the volume number, inclusive pages of the portion to which you referred, and the date of the periodical.

The **title page** should contain the title of the thesis, the author's name, the date, and the degree for which it is being submitted, for example:

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of [your degree]
at Union Theological Seminary [date]**

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