

# EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



## Ph.D. Handbook

2025–2026

## **Welcome from the Ph.D. Studies Committee**

ETS offers a highly competitive 4-year Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program. This program is designed for those who can do research at the highest level, with a view to becoming scholars and educational leaders across India and beyond. This program offers international quality research opportunity to students capable of doing research work in their own respective fields of study to contribute to the Indian and global biblical and theological scholarship. Currently, we offer courses in two fields of study, namely, New Testament and Theological Studies. The courses are tailored to produce scholars who are competent to do academic research within their disciplines.

ETS has assembled internationally qualified and recognized scholars to lead various seminars in each of the departments. These scholars have years of experience in their field of research and have contributed to their fields of research through the publication of books, journal articles, and essays along with participating and presenting papers at various professional conferences. Students will have the privilege to model these scholars and learn under them.

Entrance into the doctoral program is highly competitive and merit based. We encourage all students who are interested in higher studies and who possess the necessary qualifications to apply.

### **The ETS Ph.D. Committee Includes:**

Dr. Joy George, Chancellor of ETS  
Dr. Stephen George, President of ETS  
Dr. Eldy Eldhose, Academic Dean of ETS  
Dr. Kevin Storer, Director of Ph.D. Studies at ETS

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## **PREFACE**

### **HISTORY OF ETS PH.D. PROGRAM**

The residential Doctor of Philosophy Program of ETS began in the summer of 2019 with two fields of study, New Testament and Theological Studies. ETS has been offering courses in master's level degree programs for over four decades. The residential Ph.D. program therefore is a natural extension of the master's level programs in light of the continuing need to offer international quality research program in the Indian context to help develop scholars within an evangelical framework.

### **ABOUT ETS & ACA**

The Asian Christian Academy was founded with a holistic vision where theological education was central to its broader engagement with society. Today Asian Christian Academy houses 10 ministries from K-12 education, healthcare, and orphan care to an autism ministry and vocational education. Central to this design is theological education and its first ministry was the Evangelical Theological Seminary founded in 1983. Today ETS has more than 1000 alumni all over Asia and envisions itself as a premier evangelical theological institution in India.

The PhD program was started with a vision to provide scholar leaders for the hundreds of evangelical institutions in Asia. ETS' vision is to train the next generation of professors who are not only able to teach as experts within their field but can contribute to their discipline from an Indian and Asian perspective. By training them in India, ETS is able to train them at a lower cost than the west. Additionally, their training occurs while being immersed in the Indian and Asian context. ETS goal is to train scholars who are committed to evangelical doctrine (our broadly creedal Christian faith).

### **MISSION**

The mission of Evangelical Theological Seminary as a professional, graduate-level institution is primarily to glorify God by training and equipping godly leaders for the promotion of the gospel and the equipping of the body of Christ through proper exposition of the Word in India and South Asia.

### **PURPOSE**

As a graduate-level professional institution, the purpose of ETS is to equip students with necessary training in the doctoral and masters' level programs to engage in a variety of Christian ministries. As such, we seek to provide training to develop competent Christian ministers who can be entrusted with the Word and evangelical scholars who can do research at the highest level who can make contribution to the larger field of study. While the seminary is an evangelical institution in its doctrinal and theological commitments, it nonetheless seeks to make contribution to the larger community through relevant cultural, theological, and ecclesiastical engagement.

### **GOALS OF THE PROGRAM**

The PhD program has educational and personal spiritual goals, which are as follows:

#### **Educational Goals:**

- To enable students to develop skills necessary for critical thinking and to do research at the highest level.
- To enable students to gain mastery of the field of study by being able to critically evaluate scholarly views and major issues within their field of study.

- To help students become independent researchers with highest integrity in handling primary and secondary materials pertaining to their field of study.
- To encourage students to contribute to biblical and theological scholarship, especially from an evangelical perspective.

**Personal Spiritual Goals:**

- To manifest personal piety, Christian character and integrity, and a full devotion to Christ and the church.

## PART ONE: ACADEMIC POLICIES

### 1. Doctrinal Requirements

The ETS doctoral program is broadly Evangelical and engages in theological discourse from the perspective of the Historic Christian Tradition. For admission and reception of the Ph.D. from ETS, students must affirm:

1. The Trinity
2. The final authority and infallibility of Scripture
3. The full deity and humanity of Christ
4. The inherent sinfulness and lostness of all human beings
5. The perfect life, substitutionary atonement and bodily resurrection of Christ
6. The gift of God's salvation is received by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone
7. The physical return of Christ

### 2. Admission Requirements

Applications for the doctoral program must be received by the Admissions office by **December 15<sup>th</sup>** for admission for the following academic year. Supporting materials (e.g., references, transcripts, doctrinal statements, etc.) must be received by **January 15<sup>th</sup>**. The completed applications are then considered for preliminary acceptance by the faculty of the appropriate academic department and by the Ph.D. Studies Committee, after which the candidates will be invited for a written and oral comprehensive exam. Once the entrance exams are completed, the Ph.D. Studies Committee will convene to discuss the results. Admitted candidates will arrive at the ETS campus at least a week prior to the starting of the summer semester.

The academic year begins on **July 1<sup>st</sup>**, although students are expected to arrive on campus at least a week prior to the beginning of the summer semester. All applicants to the Ph.D. program must meet the following general requirements:

1. Applicants must show evidence of saving faith in Jesus Christ, be of proven Christian character, and adhere to the following doctrines: the authority and inerrancy of Scripture, the Trinity, the full deity and humanity of Jesus, the spiritual depravity of humanity, the substitutionary atonement and bodily resurrection of Christ, salvation by faith alone in Christ alone, and the physical return of Christ.
2. Applicants must have successfully completed an M.Th. degree accredited by Asia Theological Association or the Senate of Serampore.
3. Applicants must have an academic record that demonstrates superior ability and shows promise of success in doctoral studies. As a general rule, applicants must have a minimum B+ (87% or 3.5 GPA) average for their M.Th. degree.
4. Applicants must have completed an M.Th. research thesis. The thesis should demonstrate competent writing ability, clarity and organization, proficiency in academic research, attention to detail, and critical reasoning and argumentation.

In addition to the above-mentioned general requirements, applicants must also meet certain prerequisites for the specialization to which they are applying. Applicants who are seeking admission into the New Testament Ph.D. program must fulfill the following prerequisites:

- Applicants should have a substantial and fairly detailed knowledge of the content of each book in the New Testament and the introductory matters pertaining to each book (its authorship, date of composition, provenance, occasion, structure, etc.).
- Applicants should be conversant in the main contours of New Testament theology.

- Applicants should have proficiency in New Testament Greek.
  - Applicants should know New Testament Greek vocabulary words which occur 50 times or more in the New Testament.
  - Applicants should be familiar with the basics of New Testament Greek syntax.
  - Applicants should be able to sight read easy to moderately difficult passages of the Greek New Testament with the help of a standard lexicon.
- Applicants should be familiar with the principles and procedures of New Testament textual criticism.
- Applicants should be acquainted with the general stages and developments in the history of New Testament interpretation.
- Applicants should have a basic understanding of the different methods and procedures used in New Testament interpretation (form criticism, source criticism, redaction criticism, literary criticism, rhetorical criticism, etc.)
- Applicants should have a foundational knowledge of Second Temple Jewish history and literature.
- Applicants should have a foundational knowledge of the history and development of early Christianity from the birth of Jesus to the early second century A.D.
- Applicants should have a basic familiarity with major issues and topics in New Testament studies like the “synoptic problem,” the “Q source,” the “quest for the historical Jesus,” the “new perspective on Paul,” etc.

Applicants who are seeking admission into the Theological Studies Ph.D. program must fulfill the following prerequisites:

- Applicants should be proficient in master’s level theological materials and be able to articulate theological concepts in depth beyond surface-level definitions.
- Applicants should have a foundational knowledge of the history of biblical interpretation.
- Applicants should have a basic understanding of important people in the history of the church, their major works, and their theological positions.
- Applications should be familiar with the development of doctrines and the role of *regula fidei*, creeds, and traditions in shaping doctrines.
- Applicants should be acquainted with various methods of biblical criticism such as form criticism, redaction criticism, rhetorical criticism, source criticism, etc.
- Applicants should be able to articulate the intersection between the natural sciences and theology.
- Applicants should be familiar with the hermeneutics of various theological systems.
- Applicants should be conversant in the various philosophical hermeneutics that affect theological thinking and shape theological works.
- Applicants should be able to deal with theological issues/concepts by interacting with differing positions or systems of theological thought.
- Applicants should be able to defend evangelical doctrines on biblical, logical, historical, and theological grounds.

## **2. Areas of Specialization**

ETS currently offers two areas of specialization:

2.1 New Testament

2.2 Theological Studies



### 3. Enrollment

#### 3.1 Entrance Exams

There are two parts to the entrance exam: written and oral comprehensive exams, which will be conducted on the same day. The written part of the exam will be about 4 hours in total and the oral exam would be about 1 hour. The written and oral exams will test general biblical and theological knowledge along with department specific questions.

##### *New Testament Entrance Exam:*

1. Test of General Bible Knowledge
2. Test of General Theological Knowledge
3. Test of Greek Language, NT Criticisms, and Critical Issues in the NT
4. Test of English Proficiency (listening and composition) and Reading Comprehension

##### *Theological Studies Entrance Exam*

1. Test of General Bible Knowledge
2. Test of General Theological Knowledge
3. Test of English Proficiency (listening and composition) and Reading Comprehension (applicants will be asked to read a scholarly article and answer questions based on the reading).

#### 3.2 Other Supporting Documents

The letters of recommendation and any prior written/published works of the applicant would be given careful consideration to evaluate Christian character and ability to think and articulate ideas. This includes their master's thesis (a master's thesis is part of the prerequisite for admission).

#### 3.3 Ph.D. Studies Committee Decision Process

Pursuant to the successful completion of the written and oral comprehensive exams, the Ph.D. Studies Committee will meet to discuss the applicant's eligibility in consultation with the faculty of each department who were part of the examination process. Those applicants who meet ETS's standard of admission will then be sent an "Acceptance Letter" to the Ph.D. Program outlining the details of onboarding (start date of the program, orientation, enrollment, etc.).

### 4. Ph.D. Studies Committee

The Ph.D. studies committee exercises general oversight over the Ph.D. program. The committee consists of the Director of Ph.D. Studies, who chairs the committee, and a faculty representative from each of the academic departments which offer a Ph.D. degree. This committee is responsible for evaluating and approving applicants for admission, approving dissertation topics, appointing dissertation committees, considering requests for extension of the program of study, approving temporary leaves of absence, addressing corrective and disciplinary issues, and recommending Ph.D. students for admission to candidacy.

### 5. Financial Information

At present, there are two ways to fund the doctoral studies at ETS: financial work-scholarship and self-funded/sponsored.

#### 5.1. Graduate Teaching Assistantship

The Graduate Teaching Assistantship is a work-scholarship which provides for tuition and a monthly stipend to cover for basic living expenses (rent, food, utility, etc.), although students may have to find additional resources if they have additional expenses. In exchange of this ETS provided funding, students are required to work 15 hours a week for each of the three semesters (i.e. July-August term; September-December term; January-April term).

## 5.2. Self-funded or Sponsored

A student may choose to self-finance or find sponsorship for the entirety of the doctoral program. It will cost them about Rupees 270,000 per annum (approximate breakdown: tuition 90k; 15k monthly living expense [15,000 x 12=180,000]). This can be paid in two installments per year.

## 5.3. Continuing Education Fee

At the end of the fourth year, the Graduate Teaching Assistantship will expire for all students enrolled in it. All students will be required to leave the campus at the end of the fourth year. For students continuing into a fifth year, a “Continuing Education” fee of **Rs 20,000 per semester** must be paid at the beginning of each semester to help cover the cost of ongoing research. This fee will be due at the end of April (for summer), August (for fall), and December (for spring). The fee will continue until the final draft of the dissertation has been approved by the dissertation committee.

# 6. Graduate Teaching Assistantship

## 6.1. What It is

Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA/TA) is designed to help students gain hands-on experience in the mechanics of designing and executing a semester-length course. As such it involves working closely with the professor on record/course assigned. This is a priceless opportunity to prepare for future academic life.

## 6.2. Policies

Each student in the ETS-funded program will be assigned to a professor who teaches master’s level course(s). The TA will work out a weekly work schedule in consultation with the professor. This work schedule includes attending classes, completing all the reading assigned for that course, preparing and conducting quizzes, mid-term and final exams, grading research papers, etc.

Work is strictly limited to 15 hours per week averaged over the course of the semester. Some weeks, the TA might work more hours, but in another week, they should work fewer hours so that their per week average does not exceed 15 hours. Keep in mind that most TAs will have a heavy workload at the end of a semester, so during the rest of the semester they should be working less than 15 hours per week. Students and advisors need to fill out a “work agreement” form and file it with the Director of Ph.D. Studies.

## 6.3. ACA Employment Policy

TAs are employees of Asian Christian Academy, with all rights and responsibilities. They must abide by all ACA work policies and codes of conduct. TAs should be treated with the same dignity and respect that is given to other ACA employees.

# 7. Residency and Leave of Absence

## 7.1. Duration of the Program

Student enrolled in the Ph.D. program are ideally expected to complete this program in four years from the time of enrollment. The first 2½ years is designated the “**course-work stage**” and will be spent in various seminars, successfully writing a dissertation proposal and a dissertation syllabus, and on completing written and oral comprehensive exams. Upon the successful completion of the course-work stage, students will be moved to “**Ph.D. candidacy**” stage, or what is often called “All but Dissertation” (ABD) status. Students will have about 1½ years to complete their dissertation while still living on campus.

Financial assistance and on-campus accommodation is provided only for the first four years of the study. If a student goes into the fifth year to complete the dissertation project, (s)he must leave the campus and work remotely (the student may be able to access ETS library remotely, and will need to contact ETS librarian for the details). Under special circumstances, the Ph.D. Committee may allow an extension to the program of an extra year (year 6) to complete the dissertation project, but this decision is based on the committee’s evaluation of the student’s progress and the extenuating circumstances under which the request is made. Normally students will not be allowed to continue in the program beyond six years from the time of enrollment unless the student has been granted a long-term leave of absence (see the policy on long-term leave of absence). All students will be required to pay a per-semester tuition fee for continuing education credits after the end of their fourth year, in order to remain enrolled in the program.

## 7.2. Residency

Because students are expected to successfully complete their Ph.D. program within four to five years from the time of their enrollment, and because time of residence on campus is not to exceed four years, the following policies apply.

- 7.2.1 Work Scholarship Students (TA’s):** Students who are working as TA’s must be present on campus in residence for the *entire four years*, or until the completion of the degree, whichever is first. Students are permitted *two weeks leave* from campus each year (usually Christmas break). Furthermore, students are required to use their two week leave when they are not performing the duties of Teaching Assistant (i.e. during Christmas or summer break).
- 7.2.2 Self-funded or Sponsored Students:** Students who are *Self-funded or Sponsored* must be present on campus *during their coursework*. Once they have finished coursework, they may choose to remain on campus or move away from campus. However, the same schedule of completion is expected for Self-funded or Sponsored students as for Work Scholarship students (successful completion of the seminars, dissertation syllabus and comprehensive exams is expected within 2½ years, and successful completion of the dissertation is expected in four to five years), and it is encouraged that they remain on campus where they will have better access to resources and faculty. Self-funded students who leave campus after coursework is completed will still be required to pay a “continuing education” fee every semester until they complete their Ph.D (see 5.3).
- 7.2.3 All Students After Year 4:** After four years, all students who have not yet completed the program will be asked to leave the campus. After four years, students will pay a “continuing education” fee every semester until they have completed their Ph.D (see 5.3).

## 7.3. Temporary Leave of Absence

In case of extenuating circumstances (hospitalization or death in the family), the student may apply for temporary leave of absence of normally about 48 hours, and the

Director of Ph.D. Studies has the right to grant such requests. This short-term leave would be considered part of the student's two week annual leave.

#### **7.4. Long-Term Leave of Absence**

Students who require long-term (up to one full academic year) leave of absence due to extenuating circumstance (such as a long-term debilitating sickness), may complete an application form (obtainable from the Ph.D. Studies Office) and appeal to the Ph.D. Studies Committee for the same. Requests for leave of absence will be considered on an *ad hoc* basis and the request may be granted or denied at the discretion of the Ph.D. Studies Committee. Note: It is unlikely that any circumstance *other than* a long-term illness would be considered reason for granting a long-term leave of absence.

### **8. Student Advising**

Two types of student advising are available: from the Ph.D. Studies Office and from each department (mainly from the Department Head). Usually, it involves giving students guidance on their academic journey from start to finish. The advising will include guidance on financial planning (in self-funded cases), selecting electives, independent study, research interests and possible areas of research, etc. In addition, a member of the faculty will be appointed to serve as an academic advisor on an ongoing basis. Students are also encouraged to approach each of the faculty members for gathering various research ideas and learning about the professor's own research methods and interests to enrich their learning experience.

### **9. Evaluation of Studies**

Students are evaluated throughout their program for their academic acumen (through seminar preparation and leading, seminar participation, written research papers, etc.) and Christian character. Students are required to be active members of local church during their stay at ETS. This allows ETS to evaluate their Christian maturity and accountability since we believe in the holistic development of each student.

Course evaluations (grades) are given by the individual professor. Each professor has the discretion of dividing the course grading across various categories such as reading, seminar presentation and participation, research paper, exams (if necessary), etc. and assign a certain percentage to each of these categories. Generally, the professor has the final authority on a student's final grade. If a student has evidence of any disparity or discrimination in a professor's evaluation of his/her course, (s)he may appeal to the Ph.D. Studies Committee for review and the Ph.D. Studies Committee will undertake a review of the matter. The findings and decisions of the Ph.D. Studies Committee will be final and binding.

#### **9.1. Grading System**

Listed below is the grading scale used for the Ph.D. program and the corresponding number of grade points per credit hour.

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Digital Grade</b>	<b>Grade points</b>
A+	99–100	4.00
A	96–98	4.00
A-	94–95	3.83
B+	91–93	3.67
B	88–90	3.55

B-	86–87	3.33
C+	83–85	2.88
C	80–82	2.55
C-	78–79	2.00
D+	75–77	1.77
D	72–74	1.33
D-	70–71	0.70
F	0–69	0.00

- **A** = Work of exceptional quality
- **B** = Work of commendable quality (the minimum standard to remain in the program)
- **C** = Not acceptable for credit toward the PhD degree.
- **D** = very poor performance and unacceptable for a research program.
- **F** = Failure to do passing work with no credit given.

A grade of B (minimum GPA of 3.5) or higher is considered passing for Ph.D. course work. A minimum grade of B must be received on each and every course to receive credit toward graduation. If a student receives a grade lower than B in any course, then the student will be withdrawn from the Ph.D. program. A grade of B is the minimum passing grade for comprehensive exams and the doctoral dissertation as well.

Grade point values are used to compute the student's Grade Point Average (G.P.A.). G.P.A. computation takes into account only those grades earned in the Ph.D. program at ETS.

## 9.2. Other Grade Notations.

Grade	Meaning	Notes
<b>IP</b>	In Progress	The student is in the process of completing the course. The grade notion IP may be used for the doctoral dissertation while the student is in the “continuing phase” of dissertation writing.
<b>IC</b>	Incomplete	The student has not completed the requirements for the course. The student will receive a 0 grade until the course is completed.
<b>CR</b>	Credited	The student has met the basic requirements for a course that does not carry any grade points (e.g., comprehensive exams, any modern language requirements, etc.).
<b>NCR</b>	No Credit	Students who fail the comprehensive exam the first time will be assigned NCR against the course in the transcript.
<b>U</b>	Unsatisfactory	The student has not met the basic requirements for the course.
<b>W</b>	Withdrawn	The student has withdrawn from the course with permission and has not completed the course.

## 10. Academic Integrity and Policy on AI

ETS holds students to a very strict standard of academic and personal integrity. Any impropriety in these areas will be informed to the Ph.D. Studies Committee. After proper investigation, any student deemed to be in violation of the ETS' academic and student-life policy will be dismissed with immediate effect.

A student must be in “**academic good standing**” for the entire duration of the program. This includes the maintenance of minimum requirement of GPA per course, mature Christian character, and compliance in all matters related to ETS Student-Life regulations.

**10.1 Academic Integrity:** Following are general rule of thumb when it comes to what amounts to plagiarism and academic dishonesty:

- 1) Here’s a quote from the Oxford University’s website on Plagiarism: “Presenting work or ideas from another source as your own, with or without consent of the original author, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition, as is the use of material generated wholly or in part through use of artificial intelligence (save when use of AI for assessment has received prior authorization e.g. as a reasonable adjustment for a student’s disability). Plagiarism can also include re-using your own work without citation. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence.”<sup>1</sup> All ETS PhD students are encouraged to go through this website and learn about what amounts to plagiarism and what’s not to protect oneself against the malady of plagiarism found in the academy.
- 2) Borrowing or copying ideas, words, phrases or paraphrasing without giving proper credit is considered plagiarism and is an affront to Christian integrity. This includes published and unpublished works (such as dissertations, research data, etc.). Giving proper credit adds value to one’s research. All quotations, ideas, and paraphrasing must be properly introduced as necessary to avoid any ambiguity for a reader as to whose idea it is. Failing to do this creates the appearance that it is student’s own idea. Sometimes a simple footnote is not sufficient to give credit to a work.
- 3) Each borrowed item must receive immediate citation (normally at the end of the sentence). If more than one source is referenced in support of an idea, it can be combined under the same footnote by following the proper Turabian and SBL format.
- 4) Academic dishonesty would include but not limited to recycling and reusing a previously submitted work or parts of it for a new project (could be one’s own or someone else’s), deliberately misrepresenting, misquoting scholars or ideas to argue or establish one’s own point of view, and any kinds of academic malpractice such as copying in exams or storing answers on retrievable devices other than ETS server (if instructed), asking others, especially senior students for questions and answers, etc.
- 5) All parts of a student’s research paper, comprehensive exam, and dissertation must be the work of his or her own and no part of it can be plagiarized. Part of the goal of the PhD Program is to enable students to become independent researchers with integrity.

**10.2 Policy on Generative AI.**<sup>2</sup> Artificial Intelligence (AI) is bringing about changes in academic research. The ethical principles and general guidelines below are intended provide an academic environment in which AI may be used appropriately to further research.

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<sup>1</sup> See University of Oxford, Statement of Plagiarism: (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism#:~:text=%E2%80%9CPresenting%20work%20or%20ideas%20from,your%20work%20without%20full%20acknowledgement.>)

<sup>2</sup> For a useful statement on AI, see the University of Oxford, Guidelines on the use of Generative AI: (<https://communications.admin.ox.ac.uk/communications-resources/ai-guidance#collapse4654506>).

**Ethical Principles:** The following ethical principles guide ETS toward an appropriate use of AI:

- 1) **ETS is committed to academic integrity and honesty.** If and when generative AI is used, its usage must be acknowledged by the user (through proper citation).
- 2) **AI is a research tool, and the researcher is fully responsible for his/her use of tools.** Any inaccuracy or perception of plagiarism caused by AI is the sole responsibility of the user.
- 3) **Human creativity, problem solving, careful research, and integrity are virtues to be developed in the Ph.D. program.** AI may be used when it promotes development of these virtues. AI is absolutely prohibited whenever it becomes a substitute for these virtues.

**General Guidelines:** The above ethical principles lead to the following general guidelines for research:

- 1) **AI may never serve as the “author” of any part of any text submitted by student or faculty.** Any use of generative AI to replace human authorship is prohibited.
- 2) **AI may never serve as a substitute for learning.** Students are required to understand and capably discuss all texts assigned to them.
- 3) **AI is permitted when it:**
  - a. **Assists in performing manual tasks or provides suggestions for more effective communication.** Ph.D. students and faculty are free (unless instructed otherwise) to programs like Grammarly in preparing documents for submission. Users should be aware that they are held accountable for the implementation of words and sentence structures suggested by these programs. (At times AI may suggest technical words which lead to a suspicion of plagiarism, and at times AI may provide incorrect vocabulary or sentence structure which introduce errors into the research.) *Researchers are always solely accountable for the words and structure of the texts they submit.*
  - b. **Gathers data for research more quickly than traditional search methods.** Ph.D. students and faculty are encouraged to utilize AI tools for gathering research, yet are responsible 1) to check for accuracy all sources and data gathered by AI, and 2) to cite any generated idea that exceeds the presentation of sources and data. *Researchers are always solely accountable for the accuracy of the data they use.*
  - c. **Functions as a conversation partner to stimulate creative thinking.** Ph.D. students and faculty may use generative AI as a dialogue partner to deepen the researcher’s understanding of and creative thinking on the topic of research, provided that they appropriately cite any ideas generated by AI rather than themselves. *Researchers are always accountable for giving credit to the source of any new idea.*

## 11. Student Regulations and Student Life

ETS expects all students to live in a symbiotic relationship with all the residents on campus. Ph.D. Students should abide by all the community standards of ETS for the entirety of their program.

### 11.1. Student Accommodation

Availability of on-campus accommodation is based on various criteria. ETS Housing Department determines the allocation of on-campus housing. If available, family students may have the opportunity to choose from various floor plans. A general rule of thumb is that a family with one child will be given a single-bedroom apartment.

Single male students will be given a two-sharing room at the RSRC (Research Scholar Residential Complex) building. Single female students will be given a two-sharing room located in the female dormitory.

## **11.2. Student Life**

Ph.D. students are expected to abide by the ETS Student Handbook during their stay at ETS. Students who need to leave the campus for any overnight stay must take permission from the Director of Ph.D. Studies. Students on the ETS funded program must also abide by the HR policy on absence/leave since those students are considered “contract workers” and all clauses pertaining to “contract workers” will be applied to them in such instances.

Single students are not allowed to entertain any female/male students or guests (including family members) in their apartments at any time. All ETS policies pertaining to student life will be applicable to Ph.D. Students. The ETS resident policies on alcohol and drug use will be strictly applicable to Ph.D. students. Any infractions will be met with disciplinary action that may include dismissal from the program.

Ph.D. students are expected to be always above reproach. Ph.D. program is a certification of academic excellence, integrity, ability to do independent responsible research, and Christian character. Character certification from faculty members is carefully considered before granting doctoral candidacy to anyone.

## **12. Policies on Special Needs**

ETS does not discriminate students based on cast/race, color, gender, national and ethnic origin, or disability in the administration of any of its admission policies, programs, funding, and operations. If any student has a disability that requires modification of the course material or facilities, the student is solely responsible to inform the Director of Ph.D. Studies and the professor on record to attend to such concerns in a timely manner.

## **13. Policies on Harassment**

No harassments (physical, emotional/mental, financial, etc.) under any circumstances are permitted at any time. In any such case, the student is responsible to inform the incident to the Director of Ph.D. Studies and the HR Department who then will keep the ACA/ETS management informed about the incident and if necessary, seek counsel. Pursuant to loading the compliant, proper investigation will be conducted by the appropriate authorities. If deemed necessary, it will be referred to the “General Counsel” of ACA/ETS for further inquiry and course of action.

## **14. Disciplinary Action and Dismissal from the Seminary**

ETS Ph.D. Program will follow a multi-step process to take disciplinary actions and eventual dismissal from the seminary without a recourse to readmission. The Ph.D. Committee will function as the Disciplinary Committee to determine the course of action to be taken for each case.

### **14.1. Academic Discipline:**



A **3-step process** will be followed for any infractions on academic policy (late arrival, absences without permission, failing to live up to seminar/program requirements, etc.) and integrity (plagiarism and academic dishonesty): Step 1—first written warning (could result in further disciplinary actions depending on the nature of the offense); Step 2—second written warning; Step 3—dismissal from the program for repeated offenders.

**Immediate dismissal** will result if a student 1) receives less than a “B” for any course; 2) fails the written or oral components of the comprehensive exams twice; or 3) commits a serious violation of the academic policy (normally any form of plagiarism or inappropriate use of generative AI).

#### **14.2. Violation of the ETS Campus-Life Rules**

Any violation of ETS Campus-Life Rules will result in disciplinary action including dismissal from the program. A 3-step disciplinary action will be undertaken in most cases although some cases would require immediate dismissal. Step 1—first written warning (could result in further disciplinary actions depending on the nature of the offense); Step 2—second written warning; Step 3—dismissal from the program for repeated offenders.

#### **14.3. Violence and Damage to Property on Campus**

Any sort of physical violence or altercation including damage to ETS/ACA campus property could result in immediate dismissal without warning. ACA/ETS Management along with the Ph.D. Studies Committee will determine the appropriate course of action in any such incidents.

#### **14.4. Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty are two of the cardinal sins in theological education and ETS PhD program will not tolerate any violation of it (every student will have become familiar with what plagiarism is in their Research Method [RS1004], a course offered in the first semester itself). The first instance of such an incident across all courses and assignments will be assessed based on the circumstances and the gravity of the offense. If deemed accidental (examples would include accidentally forgetting to use quotation marks or accidentally using several words of a source as one’s own after leaving the source and forgetting that they came from that source), then the student will be given a written warning by the professor on record and will report to the PhD Studies Office for record keeping. For a second offense, the student will be terminated from the program since (s)he would have already proven untrustworthy to do research with the highest integrity. For most incidents, the first offense will lead to expulsion from the program.

### **15. Withdrawal from the Program**

A student may be withdrawn from the program due to various reasons: 1) long-term health concerns, 2) Inability to complete the residency requirements, 3) failing to remain in “academic good standing.” Once a student has been withdrawn from the program, it is highly unlikely that such a student would be readmitted to any of ETS’ programs. In some cases (under #3), whether a student will secure the release of transcript will be the decision of the Ph.D. Committee. The decision of the Ph.D. Studies Committee on this matter will be final.

## PART TWO: PH.D. PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

### 1. STRUCTURE OF THE PH.D. PROGRAM

The Ph.D. program at ETS is designed to be a four-year, full-time program. The first 2 ½ years of the program are dedicated to the completion of Ph.D. seminars, qualifying papers, and comprehensive exams. During the remaining 1 ½ year, students will work toward the completion of a Ph.D. dissertation. While they are permitted to be in “residence” for four years, they are not required to be on campus full-time provided they make progress in their dissertation writing in a timely manner and be able to present on campus for student-reader meetings, submission of drafts (physical copy), and dissertation defense.

#### 14.5. Course Schedule

Following is a suggested breakdown of an ideal two-year course-work stage. First year and second year students will take fall and spring seminars together; hence, the second-year course schedule of the junior students will look different. The following table provides an example of what course offerings *might* look like during each semester.

**Year 1 and Year 2 Schedule for Theological Studies Track**

	Year 1	Year 2
<b>Summer July-August</b>	Research Methods Reading Seminar	<b>Dissertation Proposal due 20<sup>th</sup> August</b>
<b>Fall September-Dec.</b>	Theological Studies Seminar <sup>3</sup> (joint seminar) Philosophy 1 <sup>4</sup> Theological Studies Seminar	Theological Studies Seminar <sup>5</sup> (joint seminar) Philosophy Special Topic 2 <sup>6</sup> Theological Studies Seminar
<b>Spring January-April</b>	Theological Studies Seminar <sup>7</sup> Theological Studies Electives Theological Studies Electives	Theological Studies Seminar <sup>3</sup> Dissertation Syllabus Development
<b>Summer April-August</b>	Guided Research on Dissertation Proposal	Major Comprehensive Exam

**Year 1 and Year 2 Schedule for New Testament Track**

	Year 1	Year 2
<b>Summer</b>	Research Methods <sup>8</sup> Reading Seminar	Dissertation Proposal
<b>Fall</b>	Theological Studies Seminar (joint seminar) <sup>9</sup>	Theological Studies Seminar (joint seminar) <sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Year 1 and Year 2 students from the Theological Studies track will take this seminar together.

<sup>4</sup> This course will provide philosophical resources for the task of theology.

<sup>5</sup> Year 1 and Year 2 students from the Theological Studies track will take this seminar together.

<sup>6</sup> This course will seek to cater to each student’s dissertation proposal.

<sup>7</sup> Year 1 and Year 2 students from the Theological Studies track will take this seminar together.

<sup>8</sup> First year Theological Studies and New Testament students will take this class together.

<sup>9</sup> All first and second year students from both the Theological Studies and New Testament tracks will take this seminar together.

	New Testament Seminar (joint seminar) <sup>5</sup> New Testament Elective	New Testament Seminar (joint seminar) <sup>5</sup> New Testament Elective
<b>Spring</b>	Greek Language Seminar <sup>10</sup> New Testament Elective New Testament Elective	Greek Language Seminar <sup>6</sup> Dissertation Syllabus Development
<b>Break</b>	Minor Comprehensive Exam	Major Comprehensive Exam

## 14.6. Four-Year Timeline

Following is a four-year framework designed to help students from start to finish. This guideline helps them to prepare well and work towards their research project (dissertation) right from the outset.

<b>YEAR 1</b>		<b>YEAR 2</b>	
Jul–Mar	Seminars	Sept–Dec	Seminars
Apr–Aug	Diss. Proposal <sup>11</sup>	Jan–mid-Apr	Seminar + Syllabus

<b>YEAR 3</b>		<b>YEAR 4<sup>12</sup></b>	
Mid-Apr–mid-Dec	Major Comps <sup>13</sup> Diss. Syllabus <sup>14</sup>	1 September	1 <sup>st</sup> two chapters
Mid–Apr-mid-Aug	Dissertation Writing	15 December	1 <sup>st</sup> Draft
		Mid-Feb	Dissertation Defense <sup>15</sup>
		March 15 <sup>th</sup>	Final Draft
		April	Graduation

## 2. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students in the New Testament and Theological Studies program must successfully complete 47 credit hours (including dissertation)<sup>16</sup> for graduation. See the breakdown of credit hours below:

### 2.1. New Testament

Research Method	: 3 Credit Hours
NT Seminars	: 27 Credit Hours

<sup>10</sup> Greek grammar courses are required only for the NT students. Some courses first and second year students take together and some separately depending on the prerequisite for the course.

<sup>11</sup> The dissertation proposal must be approved for students to enter their second year.

<sup>12</sup> In order to graduate in 4 years, this timeline needs to be followed. At the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> year, the student will be required to leave the ETS campus.

<sup>13</sup> If the student fails one topic only and passes the other three, the student will be given one month to prepare for a second oral exam. If the student fails more than one topic, the student will be given 4 months (Mid-March) to retake the major comps. This will include a retake of all written comps and oral comps.

<sup>14</sup> Because the dissertation proposal must be approved before students are qualified to enter their second year of research, ongoing work on the dissertation syllabus should be done during the second year.

<sup>15</sup> If the readers are satisfied and can sign off on the completed dissertation, then a dissertation defense will be set up by the Ph.D. Studies Office.

<sup>16</sup> Different electives will be offered for various batches depending on the availability of the professors. However, everyone will get a total of 26 credit hours of department specific seminars, 2 credit hours of research method, 6 credit hours' worth of QP1 and QP2, and 5 credit hours of dissertation, totaling 39 credit hours.

TS Seminars	: 6 Credit Hours
Minor Comps	: CR
QP1	: 3 Credit Hours
QP2	: 3 Credit Hours
Major Comps	: CR
NT Dissertation	: 4 Credit Hours
NT Continuing Dissertation	: 1 Credit Hour

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**Total : 47 Credit Hours**

## 2.2. Theological Studies

Research Method	: 3 Credit Hours
TS Seminars	: 27 Credit Hours
Philosophy Seminars	: 6 Credit Hours
Dissertation Proposal	: 3 Credit Hours
Dissertation Syllabus	: 3 Credit Hours
Major Comps	: CR
TS Dissertation	: 4 Credit Hours
TS Continuing Dissertation	: 1 Credit Hour

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**Total : 47 Credit Hours**

## 3. CATALOGUE OF SEMINARS AND COURSES

### 3.1. New Testament

#### Required Courses

COURSE CODE	NAME AND DESCRIPTION
<b>RS1004</b>	<b>Research Method</b> “This course is designed to guide the student in the use of library materials, computerized databases, and bibliographic resources as well as research strategies, dissertation topic selection, and familiarization with form and style for papers and dissertations.” <i>3 hours.</i>
<b>NT1001</b>	<b>History of New Testament Interpretation and Criticism.</b> “A critical review of the history of interpretation of the New Testament, with emphasis on contemporary issues in New Testament theology and hermeneutics. <i>3 hours</i> ”
<b>NT1002</b>	<b>New Testament Theology</b> “An examination of major New Testament theologies, which is intended as a summary course for those with a New Testament Studies concentration. <i>Prerequisite:</i> 10 hours completed in the PhD program or consent of the department. <i>3 hours.</i> ”
<b>NT1008</b>	<b>New Testament Dissertation</b> “Independent research and writing of a dissertation on an approved topic pertaining to New Testament studies, under the supervision of three faculty advisors. <i>4 hours.</i> ”
<b>NT1009</b>	<b>New Testament Dissertation Continuation</b> “The dissertation continuation course is required of all students writing a dissertation who are beyond one year in the dissertation process. Students must register for this course each fall and spring until completion of the dissertation. <i>1 hour.</i> ”
<b>NT1010</b>	<b>NT Written and Oral Comprehensive Exams</b>

#### Electives

COURSE CODE	NAME AND DESCRIPTION
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<b>NT2001</b>	<b>Advanced New Testament Textual Criticism (Language Seminar)</b> “A study of the materials, history, and praxis of New Testament textual criticism, with emphasis on examination of manuscripts and analysis of competing text-critical theories. 3 hours”
<b>NT2002</b>	<b>Seminar on the Historical Jesus</b> “An examination of method and approaches related to the Historical Jesus study so that the student can interact at a technical level on the topic. Particular attention will be given to the Third Quest, major recent treatments, and discussion of key events in Jesus’s ministry. 3 hours.”
<b>NT2003</b>	<b>The Synoptic Gospels</b> “A critical study of the relationships between the Synoptic Gospels, an investigation of various theories to explain the similarities and differences in the Synoptics, and an examination of the methods of source criticism. 3 hours.”
<b>NT2004</b>	<b>Seminar on the Theology of Paul</b> “A study of the writings of Paul in the New Testament as well as a critical reading of recent literature on these writings to discover the background, nature, and distinctives of Pauline theology. 3 hours.”
<b>NT2005</b>	<b>The Theology of the General Epistles (Language Seminar)</b> “A study of the central theological concepts in Hebrews and the epistles of James, Peter, and Jude, based on exegesis of key passages and interaction with contemporary studies of these epistles. 3 hours.”
<b>NT2006</b>	<b>Seminar on the Gospel and Epistles of John (Language Seminar)</b> “An examination of important theological topics and related issues in the Gospel and Epistles of John, including interaction with current critical approaches and exegesis of key passages, emphasizing the distinctive contribution of Johannine theology to the theology of the New Testament. 3 hours.”
<b>NT2007</b>	<b>Seminar on Apocalyptic Genre (Language Seminar)</b> “An examination of apocalyptic literature in its historical-literary context, with consideration given to texts from early Judaism and the Old and New Testaments. 3 hours.”
<b>NT2015</b>	<b>The Cultural Context of the New Testament</b> “A study of the cultural contexts of the New Testament, utilizing ancient sources to which the student was exposed in other NT seminars and relevant secondary sources in order to facilitate an understanding of the cultural contexts of and daily life in the first century. Topics such as honor/shame, patronage, family life, and religion will be discussed. Doctoral students in the class will be required to prepare and teach on a topic during the semester.” 3 hours.

### Directed/Independent Studies

<b>COURSE CODE</b>	<b>NAME AND DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>NT9001</b>	<b>Qualifying Paper 1</b> “The QP1 is meant to explore the existing research on a precise topic of interest as approved by the PhD Studies Department in order to determine the different scholarly views and, more importantly, why these scholars disagree or what new avenues of research did the literature review open up. The QP1 you should answer two questions: (1) On what points do scholars disagree and why? (2) What additional research needs to be conducted in order to move scholarship forward? 3 hours”
<b>NT9002</b>	<b>Qualifying Paper 2</b> “The QP2 is meant to be a <i>dissertation proposal</i> with a clear topic along with the following elements: pertinent literature review, the need and purpose for the study, the state of the current research, and original contribution. This paper is to be written in consultation with the dissertation committee. 3 hours.”

### 3.2. Theological Studies

#### Required Courses:

<b>COURSE CODE</b>	<b>NAME AND DESCRIPTION</b>
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<b>RS1001</b>	<b>Research Method</b> “This course is designed to guide the student in the use of library materials, computerized databases, and bibliographic resources as well as research strategies, dissertation topic selection, and familiarization with form and style for papers and dissertations.” 3 hours.
<b>TS1001</b>	<b>Readings in Theology</b> “This seminar is designed to orient students to the various contours of theology through an in-depth reading of pertinent materials in the field of theology.” 3 hours.
<b>TS1002</b>	<b>Seminar on History of Interpretation.</b> “A seminar on the exegetical and hermeneutical approaches to the Bible from the Patristic period to the present with special emphasis on the factors that shaped the said approaches.” 3 hours.
<b>TS1003</b>	<b>Seminar on Hermeneutics and Historiography</b> “A critical study on issues in hermeneutics (ancient, medieval, and modern) and historiographical research (with special attention on revisionist tendencies in modern historiography).” 3 hours.
<b>TS1004</b>	<b>Seminar on Theological Method</b> “A critical investigation of the sources of theology (revelation, tradition, culture, and philosophy) and current proposals of theological method(s) to develop a robust evangelical theological method.” 3 hours.
<b>TS1005</b>	<b>Seminar on Modern Theology and Theologians</b> “A critical study on the confluence of modern epistemology and religious study to trace the development and redefinition of classical Christian doctrines and theology in the modern times with special focus on contemporary theologians and trends in theology.” 3 hours.
<b>TS1006</b>	<b>Seminar on the History of Doctrine</b> “A study of the historical development of Christian doctrines from the Patristic period through the modern era.” 3 hours.
<b>TS1007</b>	<b>Seminar on Theological Systems</b> “A critical study of several standard theological systems and their methodology.” 3 hours.
<b>TS1008</b>	<b>Theological Studies Dissertation</b> “Independent research and writing of a dissertation on an approved topic pertaining to New Testament studies, under the supervision of three faculty advisors.” 4 hours.
<b>TS1009</b>	<b>Theological Studies Dissertation Continuation</b> “The dissertation continuation course is required of all students writing a dissertation who are beyond one year in the dissertation process. Students must register for this course each fall and spring until completion of the dissertation.” 1 hour.
<b>TS1010</b>	<b>TS Written and Oral Comprehensive Exams</b>

### Electives

<b>COURSE CODE</b>	<b>NAME AND DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>TS2001</b>	<b>A Colloquium on Eschatology</b> “A study of the eschatological understanding of the church from the beginning through to the present day with a critical appraisal of various views on the messianic hope, Israel and the future, end-times, anti-Christ, millennialism, eternal judgement, eternal state, etc.” 3 hours.
<b>TS2005</b>	<b>A Colloquium on Theological Interpretation</b> “This course is a study on a distinctly Christian interpretation of Scripture that emphasizes the Trinitarian nature and theological character of the biblical texts with special focus on the role of <i>regula fidei</i> , tradition, reading community, and the history of interpretation.” 3 hours.

### Directed/Independent Studies

<b>COURSE CODE</b>	<b>NAME AND DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>TS9001</b>	<b>Dissertation Proposal</b> The student will produce a <i>dissertation proposal</i> with a clear topic along with the following elements: pertinent literature review, the need and purpose for the study, the state of the current research, and original contribution. This paper is to be written in consultation with the dissertation committee. 3 hours.” See (4) below for details.

TS9002	<b>Dissertation Syllabus</b> See (5) below for details.
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## 4. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

### 4.1. Introduction

The dissertation proposal is, in essence, a formal plan written by the doctoral student, in consultation with their advisor, that outlines the content and objectives of the proposed dissertation. The purpose of a dissertation proposal is to demonstrate that students have done sufficient research groundwork and planning, and that they are now ready to start writing a dissertation.

### 4.2. Dissertation Proposal Timeline and Process

The dissertation proposal is written from 15 April to 20 August, at the beginning of year 2. ***Students must successfully present a dissertation proposal in order to be admitted into their second year of coursework.*** This process will be guided by a Ph.D. faculty member, and the steps of progress will be determined by the nature of the project. However, we might think of the process as including at least the following steps: QP1 (20 April to 30 May); QP2 (1 June to 31 July); and Proposal Submission (Aug).

**Qualifying Paper 1:** The goal of the first qualifying paper is for the student to conduct an in-depth, critical analysis of the existing state of research on a specific topic (i.e., a technical literature review). The QP1 is not meant to be an argument paper in which the student comes to a certain conclusion or defends a certain view. Rather, the QP1 is meant to explore the existing research on a precise topic in order to determine the different scholarly views and, more importantly, why these scholars disagree. The conclusion of QP1 should answer two questions: (1) On what points do scholars disagree and why? (2) What additional research needs to be conducted in order to move scholarship forward? The QP1 should be approximately 30–40 pages in length. It should be well researched, properly formatted, and professionally written. The QP1 is due at the end of the summer semester (August end).

**Qualifying Paper 2:** QP2 should move beyond a mere literature review and address more complex issues such as methodology. The QP2 should clarify for the student a narrow area of research and a potential path towards a dissertation. Since QP1 allowed student to have a survey of relevant literature, QP2 should function as a concrete step towards a potential dissertation topic. As such, QP2 should have a narrowed focus, identifying important issues, formulating a research question, and have a potential thesis claim. It should approximately be 30–35 pages long. A good qualifying paper should clearly demonstrate the student's ability to do independent research at a doctoral level. It should be technical and precise in its analysis, thoroughly researched, composed in good English, and properly formatted.

**Dissertation Proposal:** Out of these steps of research, a formal dissertation proposal should be generated, following the tips and guidelines below.

### 4.3. Tips to Writing a Dissertation Proposal

Since the dissertation proposal is a significant step in the Ph.D. process, it is helpful to approach it in a step-by-step manner. The following seven-step process will be used to work toward the submission of the dissertation proposal. Each of these steps needs to be done in consultation with the student's doctoral advisor.

- Step 1: Select a specific area of study.
- Step 2: Read and create an annotated bibliography.
- Step 3: Summarize the state of research.
- Step 4: Read at least one Ph.D. dissertation and analyze its structure, content, and argument.
- Step 5: Formulate a dissertation topic.
- Step 6: Construct an outline for the dissertation.
- Step 7: Write and submit a dissertation proposal.

### **Step 1: Select a Specific Area of Study**

The first step in writing a dissertation is to select a specific area of study. The specific area of study is not a dissertation topic; rather, it is a fairly narrow area of interest in which the student would like to focus his/her doctoral research. Students should consult with their advisors to refine the specific area of study so as to make it as narrow and focused as possible.

As part of this step, students should begin to compile an initial bibliography of major works (articles, essays, and books) which address their specific area of study. Students should be able to answer the following questions:

- Who are the scholars who have written on this area of study?
- What are the major (most important) works in this area of study?
- Why is this area of study important for the field of New Testament of Theological studies?

Once the student's advisor has approved a specific area of study, that specific area of study along with an initial bibliography needs to be submitted to the Director of Ph.D. Studies for filing in the student's records.

### **Step 2: Read and Create an Annotated Bibliography**

The next step is to read extensively within the specific area of study and to create an annotated bibliography. The annotated bibliography should contain a properly formatted list of pertinent research materials with full bibliographical information provided for each source. Each entry in the bibliography must have a brief annotation (1-2 paragraphs) describing the contents and relevance of the source. This annotated bibliography will eventually be submitted as part of the dissertation proposal.

### **Step 3: Summarize the State of Research**

After students have read sufficiently in their specific areas of study, they should be able to summarize the state of research in their chosen field. Student will need to produce a formal written essay of approximately 10–15 pages (double-spaced) which answers the following questions:

- Who are the major scholars who have written on this area of study?
- What positions/views do they hold?
- What are the points of agreement between each of the scholars?
- What are the points of disagreement/controversy?
- What questions still need to be answered?

The written summary of the state of research needs to be approved by the student's advisor. After the advisor has granted approval, a copy of the summary should be submitted to the Director of Ph.D. Studies for filing in the student's records.



#### **Step 4: Read a Ph.D. Dissertation and Outline Its Content and Argument**

Before formulating a dissertation topic or constructing a dissertation outline, students should first read at least one completed Ph.D. dissertation in order to gain some insights into how to write a good-quality dissertation. The purpose of this step is to become familiar with the methods and procedures of dissertation writing and the style of academic writing.

Ideally, students should read a recent dissertation that focuses on their own specific area of study. The dissertation must be from a recognized institution, preferably a well-known university, and the doctoral advisor must approve the dissertation before it is read. If a suitable dissertation was read as part of step 2, then that dissertation can be used for this step (if the advisor grants approval).

To complete this step, students need to read the dissertation that they selected and then answer the questions below. Preferably, they will first write answers to the following questions and then discuss them in person with their advisor (\*the actual procedure for this step is to be determined by the student's advisor).

✍ Questions to answer:

- ✍ What is the author's thesis?
- ✍ What is the underlying question that the author is trying to answer?
- ✍ How does the author introduce the need and relevance of the dissertation?
- ✍ How does the author discuss or summarize the existing state of scholarship?
- ✍ What methodology does the author use for the dissertation?
- ✍ What is the primary source of data for the dissertation?
- ✍ How is the dissertation structured?
- ✍ How does the author construct his/her argument (in each chapter and over the course of the entire dissertation)?
- ✍ What is the author's conclusion?
- ✍ What new contribution has the author made?

#### **Step 5: Formulate a Dissertation Topic**

Once students have read extensively within their specific areas of study, the next step is to formulate a precise dissertation topic. Usually, a dissertation topic is based on an underlying research question (or multiple research questions). The purpose of the dissertation is to answer the research question(s).

In consultation with their advisors, students will need to answer the questions below. The answers to these questions should be written and submitted to the Director of Ph.D. Studies for filing in the student's records.

✍ Questions to answer:

- ✍ What are the specific research questions that the dissertation will seek to answer?
- ✍ Do you have an initial hypothesis about the answer? If so, what is it?
- ✍ What kind of methodology or approach will you use to answer the research questions?
- ✍ What is the objective of the dissertation? In 4 to 6 sentences, state the aim of the dissertation (i.e., what is it that the dissertation seeks to accomplish).
- ✍ What will be the original contribution to the field of study?

#### **Step 6: Construct an Outline for Your Dissertation**

After formulating the dissertation topic, the next step is to construct a tentative outline for the dissertation (this should be done in consultation with the student's advisor). The outline should describe the number of chapters and the content of each chapter. For each chapter, the following information should be given:

- A chapter title

- An outline of the chapter's main (i.e., first-level) headings and a one paragraph summary of the content for each main heading (i.e., each main heading should have one paragraph describing what will be discussed under that heading)
- A bibliography of the major primary and secondary sources that will be used in the chapter.

### **Step 7: Write and Submit a Dissertation Proposal**

Having completed the preceding six steps, it is now possible to write and submit a formal dissertation proposal.

## **5. DISSERTATION SYLLABUS**

### **5.1. Writing a Dissertation Syllabus**

During the student's second year and into the third year, the student will develop the dissertation syllabus. The development of a dissertation syllabus will occur alongside ongoing coursework and preparation for comprehensive exams, and will be required for Ph.D. candidacy. Ideally, the dissertation syllabus will be completed by the time of comprehensive exams, so that the transition to candidacy will take place at that time.

#### **5.1.1. What is a Dissertation Syllabus?<sup>17</sup>**

The purpose of a dissertation syllabus is for the research project to receive final approval before students are allowed to write their dissertation chapters. Only then can you start writing a dissertation syllabus which is a blown-up version of your proposal. A lot of misunderstanding swirls around dissertation syllabus. One foundational fact cuts through it: A dissertation syllabus has no independent existence. It is a provisional document, a waystation to an eventual goal.

A dissertation syllabus is not an essay. In the humanities and some of the social sciences, a syllabus/proposal (some universities don't differentiate between a proposal and a syllabus in which case the proposal would be what ETS calls a syllabus) looks a lot like an essay, but it differs in one fundamental respect: a dissertation syllabus is a complete mapping of a dissertation which is in effect a miniature version of the final dissertation.

A dissertation syllabus in and of itself is not a dissertation. If the dissertation is a building that you will ultimately construct, then the syllabus is both an architectural blueprint of the building and a city map of the building in relationship to other buildings in the scholarly landscape. The emphasis here is on the idea of planning and mapping rather than creating. Before you can become a builder, you must first become an architect. This means that the goal of your syllabus is not to build your building, but rather to suggest what your building will look like when you do build it. A dissertation syllabus allows the readers to see a completed project. By the time a dissertation syllabus is written, it is assumed that 80-90% of the research is already completed. What rest of the dissertation will accomplish is to expand each chapter, major and minor headings, and conclusion by providing necessary arguments and supporting evidences for the conclusion of the dissertation.

### **5.2. A syllabus describes your project from both inside and outside.**

*Describing the dissertation from the inside:*

**A syllabus puts forth your argument.** It points toward how it will be proved, giving well-chosen examples without unspooling them in detail. A few exemplary details will help

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<sup>17</sup> Adapted from Leonard Cassuto, "Demystifying the Dissertation Proposal," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 11, 2011 (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Demystifying-the-Dissertation/128916>).

illustrate your presentation, but a profusion of them will distract. Such details serve the purpose of demonstrating—not fully proving—your argument.

**A syllabus describes how your argument will fit together.** What examples will you use, in what order, and why? How is the argument sequenced and subordinated? As part of the syllabus, you will need to provide chapter outlines and you should offer a clear explanation of how each chapter develops its own argument and how all of the chapters work together to form a single cohesive argument for the dissertation.

**A syllabus outlines methodology.** How will you make your argument? What theoretical, historical, contextual, and interpretative tools will you use? Will you employ any particular approach?

**Your syllabus should fit your dissertation topic.** Each dissertation topic is different, and thus each dissertation syllabus will be different. A syllabus to edit a scholarly edition of an ancient text will require a different format and presentation than a dissertation laid out in the model of a monograph (having an introduction plus four chapters on related topics). The shoe must fit the foot and not the other way around.

#### *Describing the dissertation from the outside:*

You need to show how your dissertation fits into the broader field of scholarship. Which field and subfield conversations will your project enter, and how? Which scholars will you be building on, and which ones will you be revising? Your dissertation marks your formal entry into the community of scholars, a world of intellectuals engaging in overlapping conversations of varying size and scope. Your syllabus must show your awareness of those multiple discourses and show the place your research will occupy within them. All of these details must be part of your syllabus either in a stand-alone introduction or in the first chapter of your dissertation if you don't have a separate introduction.

Accordingly, you should include a thorough bibliography in your syllabus so that readers may look at which scholarly works you plan to consult, as well as those you have consulted already. Your committee will review that list and use it as the basis for further suggestions.

#### *Final Thoughts*

Consult your adviser as you develop your syllabus from your initial proposal. You should not imagine that you will be writing your syllabus on your own. Instead, draw on the experience of your peers, and especially your adviser, as you shape your topic so that it may be the most relevant, the most challenging, and the most marketable later on.

Your dissertation will be different from your proposal. That is to be expected—and the differences can be substantial. Your syllabus outlines a hypothetical dissertation: what your thesis looks like to you from where you stand now. The goal of a syllabus is not that it should precisely outline your future dissertation without any variation at all although a syllabus does not foresee much change in the future. Any changes to the approved syllabus must be done in consultation with the supervisor of your dissertation and the readers. Rather, the syllabus should outline the dissertation as you envision it now, recognizing that the dissertation's shape and structure may change over the course of research and writing. In rare cases, the writing process of a dissertation may require substantial changes due to further evidence encountered in the process further reading and writing to the original proposal and the syllabus. In such a case, the committee will discuss to recommend it to be a different dissertation from the original one. This may require the submission of a new proposal and syllabus, but it is up to the discretion of the dissertation committee. Sometimes this could cause substantial delay in the completion of the dissertation. All changes to the dissertation

from the originally approved proposal and syllabus must receive formal clearance from the PhD Studies Office/PhD Studies Committee.

### **5.3. Guidelines and Requirements for Writing the Ph.D. Dissertation Syllabus**

The Ph.D. dissertation syllabus should be structured around the following eight headings. Students may choose to incorporate the headings directly into their syllabus, or simply to incorporate the information described under the headings without organizing the syllabus explicitly under the eight headings.

1. Introduction (need and purpose of the study, scope and limitation of the study, etc.)
2. The scholarly context and review of literature
3. Research questions
4. Materials/sources
5. Method(s)/perspective(s)/mode of procedure
6. Dissertation outline
7. Timeline for research, writing, and revision.
8. Annotated bibliography

A syllabus should normally be in the range of **25-40 pages** (double-spaced), plus an annotated bibliography, and it should be written in a polished, professional style. When the dissertation syllabus is officially submitted for review and approval, the following cover page needs to be placed on top (the student can fill in their own name, the name of their doctoral advisor, and their tentative dissertation title).

## 5.4. EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

### PH.D. DISSERTATION SYLLABUS APPROVAL FORM



Name of Student : \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Doctoral Advisor : \_\_\_\_\_

Tentative Dissertation Title : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tentative Thesis Statement : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Original Contribution : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted for Approval : \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Oral Dissertation Syllabus Defense : \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Dissertation Syllabus Approval : \_\_\_\_\_

**For office Use Only**

Syllabus Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Ph.D. Studies

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor of the Dissertation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Second Reader of the Dissertation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ph.D. Committee Member

## 5.5. Structure of the Syllabus

### 5.5.1 Introduction (suggested length: 1–5 pages)

The syllabus should begin by stating clearly the subject of the dissertation—the question(s) to be answered or the problem(s) to be solved. A brief statement should be made regarding the importance of the research and its relevance for the field of New Testament or Theological studies. Since a dissertation is meant to be an original contribution to the world of scholarship, the student should highlight how their research will make a unique advancement in the field of their study.

### 5.5.2. The Scholarly Context and Review of Literature (suggested length: 4–6 pages)

A successful dissertation syllabus needs to show how the proposed research topic fits into a broader scholarly context. The syllabus should summarize the existing state of research on the selected topic and critically review major articles, essays, and books that have dealt with the topic. The syllabus should address the following questions:

- Who are the major scholars who have written on this topic? (The authors referred to here should be listed in the bibliography, step 8 below, but the bibliography should not be limited to works directly cited in the syllabus.)
- What positions do they hold?
- Why are the key points of controversy?
- What questions still need to be answered?

### 5.5.3. Research Questions (suggested length: 1–2 pages)

The syllabus should make clear what questions the dissertation will be posing and trying to answer, or what problems the dissertation will attempt to solve. The syllabus should also state why these questions or problems are important and what new contribution the student will make to the field of study through their proposed research. Some of this information may have been introduced in step 1 above, but it should be expanded and explained in more detail here in step 3.

As part of the syllabus, there should be a preliminary thesis statement around which the entire dissertation progress. This thesis statement can be strengthened/slightly modified, but the dissertation cannot be entirely different from the initial thesis statement. It is understood that by syllabus stage, a student would have done 80-90% of the research; hence, not much of a change is anticipated.

### 5.5.4. Materials/Sources (suggested length: 1–3 pages)

In this section the student should specifically list the texts that will constitute the primary sources of data for the dissertation. The student should explain and justify why the chosen primary texts are the most appropriate source of data for the dissertation.

For each primary text, the student should also note in what language the text will be studied. For example, if a student's dissertation deals with the use of animal imagery in Second Temple Jewish apocalyptic literature, they might list the following texts:

- Book of Revelation – Greek
- Book of Daniel – Hebrew and Aramaic
- *1 Enoch* – Aramaic, Greek, and Ethiopic

In some cases, the student may not be equipped to access a text in its original or extant language (e.g., the student may not be able to read *1 Enoch* in Ethiopic). In such cases, the student should explain what language or translation of the text will be used in place of the

original. If the student chooses to use a translation of a primary text, then they need to use an accepted scholarly/critical translation.

For example:

- *I Enoch* – English
  - Since most of *I Enoch* is extant only in Ethiopic, I will use the translation produced by George W. E. Nickelsburg and James VanderKam in, *I Enoch: A New Translation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004)

#### **5.5.5. Method(s)/Perspective(s)/Mode of procedure (suggested length: 1–3 pages)**

The dissertation syllabus should briefly explain the methodology (or methodologies) that will be employed in the dissertation. The student should also justify why the chosen methodology is the most appropriate, especially if other methodologies are possible.

In this section of the syllabus the student should be able to show that they are not only thinking about what they will research, but also how they will conduct their research (their methods, perspectives, and underlying presuppositions). Not every student will be engaged in extensive methodological discussions, but everyone will have a certain perspective. This section will show the committee that the student is aware of the fact that they are studying the chosen problem/question in a certain way and not in another. It will also give the student the chance to show the committee that the perspective or method chosen is better suited than any other method or perspective to accomplish the intended goal. For some, the methodology section is quite unique and extent, but for others it will simply constitute a logical ordering of the chapters of the dissertation by providing necessary rationale for arranging the materials in such a way.

#### **5.5.6. Dissertation Outline (suggested length: approx. 1–3 pages)**

The dissertation syllabus needs to contain a tentative outline for the dissertation. The outline should briefly describe the number of chapters and the content of each chapter. For each chapter, the student should give the following information:

- A chapter title
- A concise summary (approximately one page) of the content and argument of the chapter
- An outline of the chapter's main (i.e., first-level) headings and a one paragraph summary of the content for each main heading (i.e., each main heading should have one paragraph describing what will be discussed under that heading)
- A bibliography of the major primary and secondary sources that will be used in the chapter

The dissertation syllabus should also contain a brief explanation of how the individual chapters build and work together to form the overall argument of the dissertation.

#### **5.5.7. Chapters in the Syllabus (suggested length: 15-20 pages)**

The syllabus will have clear chapter divisions with proper chapter heading. Each chapter must show a summary of the research for that chapter along with each major headings and subheadings. As much as possible, each major heading and subheading must be flushed out with enough details to give the dissertation committee members a clear idea as to how each of the chapter and the materials in it weave together into one tapestry of a dissertation. Students must provide sufficient footnotes to substantiate their claims and show evidence of scholarly discussions on the subject.

#### **5.5.8. Timeline (suggested length: 1 page)**

The student needs to submit a tentative timeline for their research, writing, and revision. The timeline should include target dates for the completion of each chapter as well as the first draft and final draft of the dissertation. They should check the various deadlines imposed by the PhD Studies Office that each stage of the dissertation should meet in order to be eligible to graduate in a particular academic year. The proposed timeline by the student should be in sync with the official deadlines. Students are always welcome to submit any part of the dissertation before its deadline.

#### **5.5.9. Annotated Bibliography**

The dissertation syllabus should list most of the major sources that would be used for the purpose of the dissertation. It needs to be as comprehensive as possible, although there can be additions to this initial list. But the list should be substantial enough to show that enough research has already gone into writing the syllabus. This allows the members of the dissertation committee to see the feasibility of the dissertation and the amount of research material available before they can approve a syllabus.

#### **5.5.10. Submission, Circulation, and Oral Defense of the Dissertation Syllabus**

When the student's dissertation committee considers that the syllabus is sufficiently developed, it will be submitted to the Director of Ph.D. Studies who will circulate it to the other members of the Ph.D. Studies Committee for initial review. The student will then appear in person before the dissertation committee and the Ph.D. Studies Committee for an oral defense of their dissertation. During the dissertation syllabus defense, members of the Ph.D. studies committee will scrutinize the proposal and provide feedback to the student and his or her advisor. After the dissertation syllabus defense, the student will make any necessary revisions to their syllabus (in some cases, it may be necessary to hold a second oral defense if substantial revisions to the syllabus were needed). Once the syllabus has been revised to the satisfaction of the entire Ph.D. Studies Committee, the committee members will indicate their official approval of the syllabus by signing the cover page. The original copy of the syllabus will be kept on file with the director of Ph.D. studies, and copies will be made for the student and the student's advisor.

#### **5.5.11. Time Limit for Dissertation Syllabus**

Students will need to submit and defend their dissertation syllabus before they are granted candidacy status. Ideally defense of the dissertation syllabus will take place around the time of the comprehensive exams.

### **6. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS**

The student will take major comprehensive exams in the third year of the Ph.D. program. The major comprehensive exams include two components, written and oral.

**Written:** Preparation for the major comprehensive exam will be completed in the early part of year 3 (mid-April to mid-October). The student will sit for the exam during the last half of October. The major written exam must be completed before the end of October, and the oral part of the exam must be completed by the first week of November. If a student fails one topic only and passes the other three, the student will be given one month to prepare for a second oral exam. If a student fails more than one topic, the student will be given 4 months (Mid -March) to retake the major comps, which will include a retake of all written comps and oral comps. Failing a second time will result in dismissal from the program.

The reading lists for the comprehensive exams are determined by the departments which teach the respective fields of study. So, for example, the New Testament department



determines the reading list for all minor and major exams dealing with New Testament studies. An appropriate reading list for a major exam should be 12,000–15,000 pages.

The purpose of the major exam is to test students' expertise in their chosen field of study. The students must have mastery of all important issues, debates, research, etc. in their field of study along with excellent understanding of major figures and schools of thought, their theological/scholarly positions, critical issues pertaining to the field of study, etc. Students in Theological Studies will take 5 different exams, each lasting 7-8 hours (A chosen area of Doctrine, Hermeneutics and Historiography, Modern theology, Systematic theology, and a Theologian in context). Students in the New Testament will take 7 different exams (NT criticisms and Historical Jesus, Greek grammar and syntax, Hebrews/General Epistles/Revelation, John and Johannine theology, NT background, Paul and Pauline theology, The Gospels and Acts).

**Oral:** Written comprehensive exams will be followed by Oral Comprehensive exam. Students who successfully complete the written part of the comprehensive exam will subsequently take the oral comprehensive exam (ideally within two weeks of the written comps). In addition to a panel of faculty (at least two) from the examinee's department, the Director of Ph.D. Studies will be present at the oral comps. A series of questions pertaining to the larger field of study will be asked, starting with the examinee's department faculty. This is to assess the student's knowledge of the field. These questions go beyond the written questions. Once the department faculty are satisfied, the floor will be open for other faculty members to ask questions. Typically, an oral comprehensive exam lasts 2-3 hours.

## 7. ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

The Ph.D. committee is responsible for admitting Ph.D. students to candidacy. Students will be admitted to candidacy only after they have (1) completed (with passing grades) all the seminars required for their degree program; (2) passed comprehensive examinations; (3) received approval on a dissertation topic; (4) received approval on a dissertation syllabus; (5) shown evidence to the satisfaction of the Ph.D. committee of proven Christian character and ability and acceptability for Christian ministry; and (6) affirmed adherence to the following doctrines: the authority and infallibility of Scripture, the Trinity, the full deity and humanity of Christ, the spiritual lostness of the human race, the substitutionary atonement and bodily resurrection of Christ, salvation by faith alone in Christ alone, and the physical return of Christ.

All students admitted to candidacy will be assigned a dissertation advisor, with whom they will meet regularly to discuss research and give updates on their progress.

## 8. DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

### 8.1. Introduction

A student can begin the actual dissertation writing process once his/her dissertation syllabus has been approved by the Ph.D. Studies Committee. A doctoral dissertation is a formal treatise that advances a proposition based on extensive scholarly research. It is intended for a technical audience, and it must be clear, complete, and substantiated by evidence and sound reasoning.

### 8.2. Basic Criteria for Acceptance

Before accepting a dissertation for the Ph.D. degree, the student's dissertation committee must be satisfied that (1) it is sound methodologically, (2) its argument is coherent throughout, (3) it critically evaluates previously published works on the subject, (4) it is clearly and effectively written, and (5) it represents a significant contribution to learning. Its

contribution may be the discovery of new knowledge, the connection of previously unrelated facts, the development of an original point of view, or the revision of older views.

### 8.3. General Style and Format for the Dissertation<sup>18</sup>

The dissertation must conform to the standards outlined in *The SBL Handbook of Style, Second Edition* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014) and the *Student Supplement for The SBL Handbook of Style, Second Edition*, compiled by Melanie Greer Nogalski, James D. Nogalski, Sophia G. Steibel, and Danny M. West (available online). For items not addressed by *The SBL Handbook of Style* or the *Student Supplement*, students should consult the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian, and the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

#### 8.3.1. Length

The dissertation should be at least 60,000 words but must not exceed 75,000 words, including footnotes and appendices but excluding bibliography. In most cases this will amount to 200 to 300 pages.

#### 8.3.2. Sequence of Parts of the Dissertation

A standard graduate dissertation consists of the following parts, and is arranged in this order:

1. Preliminary Pages
2. Dissertation Body
3. Appendices
4. Bibliography

##### 8.3.2.1. Preliminary Pages

The following preliminary pages will precede the main body of the dissertation: (a) Title Page; (b) Examination Committee's Signature page; (c) Dissertation Abstract; (d) Table of Contents; (e) List of Abbreviations; (f) List of Figures, Charts, and Tables; (g) Acknowledgements; (h) Dedication. Preliminary pages from (c) onwards need to be numbered using Roman numerals.

**(a) Title Page:** All text on the title page must be centered between the margins. The top margin should be 5 cm (2 inches) and the left margin should be 3.8 cm (1.5 inches). The right and bottom margins should be 2.5 cm (1.0 inch). The copyright line should be placed as the last line of the page. This page is technically the first page of the dissertation, but the page itself should not be numbered. See Example 2 below for the required format. Please use ETS Dissertation Template for accuracy.

**(b) Examination Committee's Signature Page:** This page lists the names of the readers of the dissertation in this order: supervisor, second reader, third reader, and the Director of PhD Studies.

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<sup>18</sup> ETS Dissertation Template can be obtained from the ETS PhD Studies Office. All students must use the ETS Dissertation Template for their dissertation to avoid irregularities with pagination, font size, margins, and proper page and section breaks. While using the template, please turn on the "invisibles" (¶) to see the macros and not to delete them.

**(c) Dissertation Abstract:** A dissertation abstract must not exceed 350 words. It must include explaining the rationale for the research, a thesis statement, and main conclusion and contribution. This page must be numbered 'iii'.

**(d) Table of Contents:** The table of contents must include the titles of all chapter headings and subheadings with their respective page numbers. The table of contents pages must be numbered in the Roman numeral lower case. All successive pages will continue the numbering after this page in Roman numeral lower case.

**(e) List of Abbreviations and Symbols:** Standard abbreviations used in the dissertation or symbols that might be unfamiliar to a reader should be listed on this page with their appropriate definitions.

**(f) List of Figures, Charts, and Tables:** All figures, charts, and tables in the dissertation need to have a number and appropriate title (e.g., Figure 1: Seal of King Hezekiah). All figures, charts, and tables should be listed in the preliminary pages with their respective numbers, titles, and page numbers.

**(g) Acknowledgements:** An expression of thanks for assistance given by the dissertation supervisor and other significant individuals.

**(h) Dedication:** Usually students dedicate their dissertation to someone significant in their lives. It could be their parents, spouse, children, or someone who has influenced them greatly.

### **8.3.2.2. Dissertation Body:**

#### **8.3.2.2.1. Margins**

To ensure sufficient space on the page for binding, the TOP and LEFT margins should be 1.5 inches (3.8 cm), and the RIGHT and BOTTOM margins should be 1 inch (2.5 cm). These margins also apply to all illustrative material, including diagrams, maps, photographs, charts, and tables.

The first page of a chapter, appendix, or bibliography should have a top margin of 2 inches (5 cm) and then regular margins on every page thereafter.

#### **8.3.2.2.2. Font**

The dissertation must be printed in a standard font, such as Times New Roman, at a 12-point font size. The entire dissertation must be in the same font. The text of the dissertation should be double-spaced except for block quotations, certain charts and tables, footnotes, and bibliographic entries.

#### **8.3.2.2.3. Spelling and Grammar**

The dissertation should be written using either proper American or British spelling and grammar conventions. Whichever convention is chosen should be maintained consistently throughout the dissertation.

#### **8.3.2.2.4. Foreign Languages**

All foreign language materials should be typed in their native scripts with the appropriate diacritical and accent marks. Texts like Hebrew and Aramaic, which are written from right to left, should be justified on the right margin of the page. For conventions regarding foreign languages, see the *SBLHS* §5.

#### 8.3.2.2.5. Page Numbers

All pages are to be numbered except the half title page, which is disregarded in the pagination, and the title page, on which the number (i) is implied but not written. The remaining preliminary pages should be numbered with lower-case Roman numerals (ii, iii, iv, etc.) placed in the center at the bottom of the page, approximately 2 cm from the bottom edge of the paper. Page numbers should be in a consistent location on each page.

All text-pages of the dissertation, beginning with the Introduction or Chapter 1, must be numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.). This includes pages with tables, illustrations, diagrams, appendices, and bibliographies. Page numbers should be located at the bottom center of the first page of each chapter and at the top right corner of subsequent pages. Appendices and bibliographies are formatted like chapters.

#### 8.3.2.2.6. Footnotes

Most word processors such as WordPerfect, Pages, and Microsoft Word are set to create footnotes in the correct format. Footnotes should be numbered sequentially and placed at the foot of the page (endnotes are not acceptable). The sequential numbering of footnotes should start over at the beginning of each chapter or appendix so that the first footnote in each chapter will have the number 1. All footnotes should be typed in 10-point font, indented one-half inch on the first line of the footnote, and separated from one another by a 6-point space. Each footnote should be on the same page as the text to which it refers. When a word processor such as Microsoft Word does not accomplish this automatically, adjust the line spacing to “exactly” on the “paragraph” window.

#### 8.3.2.2.7. Headings and Subheadings

The following formats should be used for headings and subheadings in the dissertation:

- **Primary heading:** centered, all capital letters, long titles single-spaced
- **First-level subheading:** centered, bold, capitalized headline style
- **Second-level subheading:** centered, capitalized headline style (no bold)
- **Third-level subheading:** on left margin, bold, italics, capitalized headline style
- **Fourth-level subheading:** on left margin, capitalized headline style (no bold or italics)

There should be two blank lines between a subheading (regardless of the level) and the text of the preceding section. There should be one blank line between a subheading and the following text (except for primary headings, in which case there should be two blank lines between the heading and the following text). A heading or subheading should never be the last text on a page. If necessary, add extra blank space at the end of the page and begin the following page with a heading.

PRIMARY HEADING  
LONG TITLES ARE SINGLE-SPACED ON SUBSEQUENT LINES

There should be two blank lines between the title and the text (or subheading if there is one). The first pages of chapters are formatted like the primary heading.

### **First-Level Subheading**

A first-level subheading is centered, bold, and each initial letter is capitalized.

### **Second-Level Subheading**

A second-level subheading is centered, and each initial letter is capitalized (the type is not bold)

### ***Third-Level Subheading***

A third-level subheading is justified on the left margin and written in bold and italic type with each initial letter capitalized.

### **Fourth-Level Subheading**

A fourth-level subheading is justified on the left margin with each initial letter capitalized.

## **8.3.3. Appendices**

In many cases, dissertations will have one or more appendices. An appendix is where supplementary information, data, tables, charts, etc. are placed which are not essential to the argument of the dissertation. It is a place for candidates to showcase the depth in their research and those curious to further analyze the data or evidence can access the material. It is not a must to have an appendix for a dissertation.

## **8.3.4. Bibliography**

The bibliography is to be placed at the end of one's dissertation. It must be properly formatted to SBL style and categorized along the lines of primary sources, secondary sources, books, book sections/essays, journal articles, etc. Bibliography is not countered towards the 60,000-75,000-word limit for a dissertation.

## **8.4. Dissertation Timeline and Deadlines**

The candidate must consult the dissertation timeline proposed by the PhD Studies office and must comply with all the deadlines for each stage of the dissertation to graduate in a particular academic year. To graduate in the spring of any given academic year, the completed draft of the dissertation must be submitted by December 15<sup>th</sup> and the oral defense must be completed latest by February 15<sup>th</sup> and the final draft must be submitted on or before March 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **9. SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION PRIOR TO DEFENSE**

All candidates in the "ABD" are required to submit a completed dissertation on or before December 15<sup>th</sup>. Once the readers have had a chance to go through the dissertation one more time to make sure that all necessary changes recommended to the previous drafts were made and that the dissertation is provisionally accepted, the Ph.D. Studies Office will set up a

dissertation defense committee and will inform the candidates of the expected date of their defense. If a completed draft of the dissertation has not met the necessary benchmark, the readers have the right to ask the student to do a do-over of a part or much of the dissertation. In such a case, the supervisor of the dissertation will call a conference with the other readers and make recommendations to the Ph.D. Studies Committee as to what the next step should be.

## **10. DISSERTATION DEFENSE**

### **10.1. Purpose**

The purpose of the oral defense of the dissertation is to answer any questions that the examiners may have about the dissertation, and to determine how well the candidate understands the material. In addition, the committee should also determine if, in fact, the candidate did the work that is expounded in the dissertation and that all of the academic integrity requirements are met.

### **10.2. Examination Chair**

An experienced faculty member from the department in which the student has done the dissertation, or the Director of the Ph.D. Studies will serve as the Examination Chair. The role and function of the Examination Chair is to moderate the questions and ensure that the exam proceeds according to plan. (S)he will make sure that each of the examination committee receives fair amount of time and that the candidate is given an opportunity to respond or reach to comments and questions from the examining committee. The Exam Chair does not ask questions of the candidate, vote or sign the dissertation unless (s)he is a member of the examination committee. The Examination Chair, candidate, and all examiners should each have copies of the dissertation at the examination. A copy of the dissertation will also be in the student's file.

### **10.3. Attendance at Examinations**

The primary examiners of the dissertation will be the dissertation committee. There is usually an "outside the department" scholar who would get the opportunity to ask questions that would otherwise have not been considered. This scholar will be selected prior to the defense and given a copy of the dissertation in order to prepare for the defense. While "outside the department" examiner cannot reject a dissertation that was accepted by the department, his/her reservations will be documented and given careful consideration by the Ph.D. Studies Committee. If deemed necessary (very rare if ever), the Director would call a meeting of all the concerned parties to sort out the issues. In rare cases, a student may have to repeat the defense to satisfy the objections of the examiners.

Other faculty members are welcome to attend the oral defense of the dissertation upon invitation, but do not have the right or the privilege to ask questions. Their sole role would be to observe the proceedings and be part of the defense audience.

## **11. SUBMISSION OF THE FINAL DRAFT OF A DISSERTATION**

A Ph.D. candidate will be allowed to submit the final draft the dissertation only after a successful defense and the satisfactory completion of subsequent changes that were recommended at the time of the defense. But before that can happen, the candidate will be required to submit a provisional final draft. Once the dissertation committee is satisfied and the Director of the Ph.D. Studies is happy with the format and form, the final draft can be submitted.