



# PH.D. STUDENT MANUAL

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME  
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## Preface

The Ph.D. program began in the fall semester of 1966 as a logical extension of the existing graduate program and an element of the response of the University of Notre Dame and of the Department of Theology to the Second Vatican Council. While there is no direct tie between the Council and the beginning of the program, there are multiple lines of indirect influence. The Council opened up Roman Catholicism to the larger world (*aggiornamento*) and, at the same time, affirmed the need for a retrieval of the riches of the Christian tradition (*ressourcement*) in which Catholic faith and, therefore, theology, must be rooted. Without denying the hierarchical nature of the Church, it affirmed the universal call to holiness and the vocation of laity, including their participation in the disciplined reflection on the tradition that is theology. The work of incorporating these initiatives, and others, into an academic program in a major teaching and research university has determined the evolving character of the program as well as its structure at any given point in that development.

The Department defines itself as a Department of Theology rather than a Religious Studies Department. We understand theology by means of the classic phrase articulated by Anselm: *fides quaerens intellectum*. By “faith” we mean that the starting point for theology is a commitment to the truth of a particular faith tradition. By implication, the faculty are practicing members of communities of faith. Roman Catholicism is the dominant expression of faith among the faculty, but not the exclusive one. We are deliberately ecumenical in our faculty, and even more so in our doctoral student body. Many, although not all, of the doctoral students are practicing members of different communities of faith and find this characteristic of the faculty to be one of the attractions of the program. Yet, we have had and do have students who do not have any faith commitments and who have thrived in the program. Faith is not a prerequisite; it is the culture. By “seeking” we mean that we assume the need to search for answers which, in turn, deepen the level of understanding of the tradition. This stance is a *sine qua non* for the Ph.D. program where faith commitments cannot determine the answers in advance of the investigation. This stance is consonant with our location in a research university in which critical thinking and the right and necessity of free inquiry are respected. While this sometimes creates a tension between religious tradition and academic freedom, we believe that the two poles form a dialectic, not a divide. To the extent that we maintain the tension as a creative one, we may lay claim to be a program in both an American university and a Roman Catholic university. Finally, by “understanding” we mean that our task is intellectual. We emphasize the role of the mind in theology. Our task is to make faith intelligible and relevant to our contemporary world through training in research and teaching.

The Ph.D. program is divided into concentrations that reflect both the richness and the complexity of the theological task: Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity, Liturgical Studies, History of Christianity, Moral Theology, Systematic Theology, and World Religions World Church. While these are separate concentrations, faculty work across the boundaries of the concentrations, and doctoral students are encouraged to do the same.

The Department of Theology, with the approval of the Graduate School, has adopted this *Ph.D. Student Manual* for the use of the faculty and the Ph.D. students. It codifies the department's and Graduate School's procedures, norms, and calendar for a student's advancement toward the Ph.D. degree. Each Ph.D. student is responsible for ensuring that her/his academic work progresses according to the procedures, norms, and calendar contained in this manual.

# Part One: Academic Policies

## 1. Enrollment

Once admitted, all degree and non-degree graduate students must enroll before each semester at the times and locations announced by the University Registrar. Enrollment dates are published in the Graduate School Calendar. Any admitted student who fails to enroll for one semester or more must apply for readmission upon return.

### 1.1 Full Time Status

The Department of Theology considers doctoral studies a full time occupation. For this reason, the Department does not normally admit part time students to the Ph.D. program. Exceptions require the consent of the director of graduate studies (DGS) and the faculty of the student's specialization.

Normally, a full-time student is one who (1) registers for nine or more credit hours of required course work per semester in the academic year or (2) has taken forty-two (42) credit hours required for the degree and is registered for a minimum of nine credit hours. This second category includes both resident and nonresident students.

### 1.2 Continuous Enrollment

All students must enroll each semester in the academic year and register for at least nine credit hours per semester to maintain student status. Students need not register and enroll during the summer terms. Continuous enrollment is met normally by enrollment in the University and registration in a graduate-level course relevant to the student's program. A student who is concurrently pursuing degrees in the Graduate School and in another school in the University meets the continuous enrollment requirement by registering for a course in either program. Any exception to this rule, including a leave of absence, must be approved by the Graduate School. (See "Leave of Absence," below.) Degree students who have completed the credit-hour requirement for their degree must register for at least nine credit hours per semester, including the final semester or summer session in which they receive their degree. These students may be considered full-time students whether or not they are in residence. Students not in residence and taking nine credit hours pursuant to continuous enrollment requirements are charged a special registration fee.

A student who fails to enroll and register for one semester or more must apply for readmission upon return.

Continuing students (i.e., degree-seeking students who are eligible to continue their studies in the fall semester) may have access to University facilities and services from May through August without registering and enrolling for academic credit in the summer session.

### 1.3 Leave of Absence

For exceptional reasons and on the recommendation of the Department (i.e., the DGS), a student in good academic standing may request a leave of absence for a maximum of two consecutive semesters. A request for a leave of absence must be made before the semester in which the leave is taken, and all leaves of absence must be approved by the Graduate School. If, for some urgent reason, a student is allowed to leave the University after the beginning of the semester, the withdrawal procedure below must be followed. If at the end of the leave of absence period the student does not return, the student is considered terminated. After this, application for readmission is required if the student wishes to return.

In the case of a medical leave of absence, clearance from the University Health Center is required prior to readmission.

### 1.4 Medical Separation from Academic Duties

Students enrolled in the Notre Dame Graduate School who wish to temporarily interrupt their programs for medical reasons must apply to the Graduate School. Students are eligible under this policy if they have a “serious medical condition.” For purposes of this policy, “serious medical condition” means a medical condition that (1) requires multiple day hospitalization OR (2) renders the student unable to engage in coursework and all other Graduate School-related duties for a period of at least ten (10) calendar days. Certification by a physician that the student has a serious medical condition as defined in this policy must be submitted to the Graduate School no less than three months prior to the separation period (for childbirth and other predictable requests) or as soon as the need is foreseen (for emergency requests). In situations involving childbirth, the separation period will generally begin on the actual date of childbirth; in all cases, regardless of the nature of the medical condition, the duration of the separation will be as certified by the physician up to a maximum of 6 weeks. Students may utilize this medical separation policy two non-consecutive times during their graduate studies. Should students need more than 6 weeks at any one time, they must withdraw from the University. Leaves of absence for one semester or more for medical or other reasons are governed by the Graduate School Leave of Absence policy.

Full-time degree-seeking students in their 5<sup>th</sup> year of study or less who are receiving financial aid from the Graduate School or external funds will receive a stipend equal to their normal stipend during their period of separation, for a maximum of 6 weeks paid by the Graduate School. Students will retain their tuition scholarships, access to on-campus medical facilities, and all other resources available to students during the entire separation period (up to 6 weeks). Students also will be deemed “continuously enrolled” at the University during the entire period of separation.

Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant duties will cease at least during the period of separation. Students are responsible for making arrangements, through their departments, to cover their duties. Students taking classes will be required to make arrangements with individual course instructors for completion of any courses in progress during the leave. Students will be granted the option to re-schedule exams, extend candidacy deadlines or other deadlines not discussed herein. Students are responsible for making arrangements to reschedule exams, extend deadlines and to make up other work not discussed herein. Unlike a regular one-semester leave, time off in conjunction with this policy will count towards the students’ degree time limit of 8 years and university-sponsored funding cap of five years.

### 1.5 Withdrawal from the Program

To withdraw from the University before the end of the semester, a student must inform the Department (i.e., the Ph.D. office) and the Graduate School, as well as complete the notice of withdrawal in the Office of the Registrar, 300 Grace Hall. For information on refunds, refer to "Tuition and Expenses."

Upon approval of the withdrawal, the University enters a grade of "W" for each course in which the student was registered. If a student drops out of the University without following the procedure described above, a grade of "F" is recorded for each course.

The credit for any course or examination will be forfeited if the student interrupts his or her program of study for five years or more.

The University reserves the right to require the withdrawal of any student when academic performance, health status or general conduct may be judged clearly detrimental to the best interests of either the student or the University community.

### 1.6 Maximal Registration

During each semester of the academic year, a graduate student should not register for more than 12 credit hours of graduate courses, i.e., courses numbered 60-000 and higher. In the summer session, a graduate student may not register for more than 10 credit hours.

### 1.7 Changes in Student Class Schedule

A student may add courses only during the first seven class days of the semester. A student may add courses after this time only on recommendation of the Department and with approval of the Graduate School.

A student may drop courses during the first seven class days of the semester. To drop a course after this period and up to the mid-semester point (see the Graduate School Calendar for the exact date), a student must have the approval of the chair of the department offering the course, of his or her adviser, and of the Graduate School; however, no tuition adjustment will be made after the seventh class day of the semester. A course may be dropped after the mid-semester point only in cases of serious physical or mental illness. Courses dropped after this date will be posted on the student's permanent record with the grade of W.

A course taken for credit can be changed to an audit course after the mid-semester point only in cases of serious physical or mental illness.

### 1.8 Transfer of Credits

The doctoral program does not normally transfer credits earned at another institution. Exceptions require the approval of the DGS and the faculty of the student's area of specialization. All exceptions must follow the guidelines set out by the Graduate School and require the formal approval of the Graduate School.

### 2. Evaluation of Students

#### 2.1 Graduate Grades

Listed below are graduate grades and the corresponding number of quality points per credit hour. It is the expectation of the Graduate School that all courses taken at the graduate level will be graded by the level of the course, not by the status of the enrolled student.

A	4.000
A-	3.667
B+	3.333
B	3.000
B-	2.667
C+	2.333
C	2.000
C-	1.667
D	1.000
F	0.000
I	0.000 (until Incomplete is removed)
NR	Not reported
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
V	Auditor
W	Discontinued with permission

Quality point values are used to compute the student's G.P.A. The G.P.A. is the ratio of accumulated earned quality points to the accumulated earned semester credit hours. G.P.A. computation takes into account only those grades earned in Notre Dame graduate courses by students with graduate status at Notre Dame. For courses taken in a department or college in the University but outside the Graduate School, or taken outside the University, the grade will not be included in the G.P.A. computation.

Grades of C- and D are awarded in the Graduate School and are used to calculate both semester and cumulative G.P.A.; however, they will not be accepted for completion of graduate degree requirements, specific required coursework, and/or total credit hours for completion of coursework. If a student receives lower than a grade of C in a required course, he or she must either retake the same course or its equivalent as determined by the program to fulfill the degree requirement.

A student receives the temporary grade of I when, for acceptable reasons, he or she has not completed the requirements for a 60-000 or higher level graduate course within the semester or summer session. No grade of I can be given for courses below the 60-000 level or to graduating students in the final semester or final summer session. It is recommended that professors explain their policy on incompletes in their course syllabi. A professor need not grant an incomplete in a course. When a professor permits incompletes in a course, a student is required to ask the professor's permission to take an incomplete, and this request must be made prior to the last class day.

### 2.2 Incomplete Coursework

Students should complete the work of graduate courses at the 60000-90000 level during the regular academic term in which they are taken. This expectation of students should also guide faculty members who teach graduate courses. That is, faculty are obligated to evaluate and grade graduate work by the end of the term in which the course is offered.

A grade of "Incomplete" (I) should be given *only in exceptional circumstances* when there are compelling reasons. When a student receives a grade of I, he or she has 30 days from when grades were due (for the semester in which the I was given) to complete the coursework for a grade. If the coursework is not completed by this date, the grade of I will be changed permanently to a grade of F. Extensions for Incompletes require formal approval from the associate dean of students in the Graduate School.

\*No grade of I can be given for courses below the 60000 level or to graduating students in the final semester or final summer session of a terminal degree program.

The University temporarily computes this grade as the equivalent of an F in calculating the G.P.A. When the student fulfills the above requirements, the I is replaced by the new grade. If the student does not complete the course within the required time, the grade will be changed permanently to an F.

The Department and the Graduate School will review a student who receives more than one I in a semester or an I in two or more consecutive semesters, to determine his or her eligibility for continued support and enrollment.

The grades of S and U are used in courses without semester credit hours, as well as in research courses, departmental seminars, colloquia, workshops, directed studies, field education and skills courses. These courses, if given the grade of S, do figure in a student's earned semester credit-hour total but do not figure in the computation of the G.P.A. A grade of U will not count toward the student's earned semester credit-hour total, nor will it figure in the computation of the G.P.A.

The grade of V has neither quality-point nor credit-hour value. It is the only grade available to the registered auditor who requests at the beginning of the semester that it be made part of his or her permanent record and who attends the course throughout the entire semester. The grade of V cannot be changed to a credit-earning grade.

The grade of W is given for a course that a student is allowed to drop after the mid-semester point.

### 2.3 Examinations

Unexcused absence from a scheduled final examination results in an F. An absence excused in advance results in an I (incomplete).

### 2.4 Academic Good Standing

- **Criteria**

Continuation in a graduate degree program, admission to degree candidacy, and graduation require maintenance of at least a 3.0 (B) cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.). A student may be dismissed from the Department if the G.P.A. in any one semester is below 2.5 or if the G.P.A. is below 3.0 for two semesters.

An adequate G.P.A. is only one factor taken into consideration in determining a student's qualifications for an advanced degree. A failure to make progress toward degree requirements, including fulfillment of language requirements, according to the schedule set out in this manual will jeopardize a student's standing.

- **Loss of Academic Good Standing**

The Department may place a student on restricted financial eligibility (this can range from the loss of eligibility for travel funds to the loss of all financial aid) or academic probation (a warning that the student has lost good standing and faces possible dismissal). The Graduate School enforces an "8-semester" rule. Students have 8 semesters within which to pass their oral candidacy exams and have their dissertation proposals approved. Students who do not achieve these objectives within this 8-semester time frame will lose their funding.

In addition to the probation letter initiated by the student's program of study, there are three ways in which a student may be placed *on probation* by the Graduate School. These are:

1. A cumulative grade point average below 3.0 in any two semesters;
2. A failure to pass candidacy exams by the end of the eighth semester;
3. Earning a U in research for two consecutive semesters.

- Termination

The Department reserves the right to dismiss a student who fails to maintain academic good standing or who, in the collective judgment of the faculty, has little or no chance of successfully completing the program.

### 2.5 Student Evaluations

The performance of all doctoral students is evaluated by the Department at the end of every semester.

- The Process

At the end of every semester each member of the faculty is asked to fill out an evaluation form for every student with whom he or she has worked during that semester, and submit it to the student's area coordinator. The area coordinator condenses these evaluations into a written report, which is presented at the departmental evaluations meeting. At the meeting, the faculty make recommendations to the area coordinator who then sends a written evaluation to each student. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide detailed recommendations for the student's improvement.

- Problematic Cases

In instances where the faculty have doubts about a student's ability to complete the program or where the student has performed at a substandard level, the DGS will send a letter to the student outlining the concerns and possible courses of action. A student must be in academic good standing to be eligible for new or continued financial support.

### 3. Financial Support

#### 3.1 Principle

We assume that most students have drained their financial resources during their undergraduate and initial graduate programs. Since we require students to devote full time to their doctoral program (with very limited exceptions), we insist that all students be fully funded for the five years they spend at Notre Dame. The source of their funding may come from outside the University in the form of a scholarship or support from a religious order, but typically the University of Notre Dame funds the students.

#### 3.2 Financial Packages

For the 2023-2024 academic year, the University of Notre Dame offers full health subsidy for eligible graduate students. Eligible graduate students are those who are enrolled in the university plan, receive full tuition support and receive a stipend at or above the eligible threshold for the degree level (\$30,500 for students in doctoral programs). Eligible Students who waive the plan will receive \$200 credit on their account in late October.

- Departmental Fellowships
  - Full tuition for up to eight years
  - Departmental stipend for five years or until the student leaves campus, whichever comes first. In AY 2023-2024, the departmental stipend will be \$30,500 paid out over twelve months.
  - As a part of his or her fellowship a student serves as a teaching or research assistant to a faculty member during years two and three, and teaches two courses for the Department over years five and six of his or her program.
  
- Notebaert Premier Fellowships
  - Full tuition for up to eight years
  - In the AY 2023-2024 the stipend will be \$39,875, paid out over twelve months.
  - The stipend is for five years as long as the student remains in residence.
  - As a part of his or her fellowship a student serves as a teaching or research assistant to a faculty member during years two and three, and teaches two courses for the Department over year five of his or her program.
  - If the recipient chooses the University health insurance policy, the premium will be covered in full for the years one through five.

- Presidential Fellows
  - Full tuition for up to eight years
  - Presidential stipend for five years or until the student leaves campus, whichever comes first. In AY 2023-2024, this stipend is \$34,875 for twelve months.
  - As a part of his or her fellowship a student serves as a teaching or research assistant to a faculty member during years two and three, and teaches two courses for the Department over years five and six of his or her program.
  - If the recipient chooses the University health insurance policy, the premium will be covered in full for years one through five.

### 3.3 Additional Funding

- Travel Funds

The University also supports student travel for professional development. There are three primary sources of funding. The Department allocates a limited amount of travel funding for doctoral students to attend professional conferences. Students must be in academic good standing and in residence both for travel funding to be allocated and for it to be disbursed. Each spring students apply for funding. The awards are allocated depending on the place of the student in the program and the role of the student in the conference. Amounts typically fall into three categories: minimal, moderate, and maximum. We reserve the latter for those students who are on the job market and need to attend conferences in order to interview for positions. Reimbursement requests, including the University Expense Report form and all receipts, must be submitted to the Ph.D. Office within sixty days of the conclusion of the conference for which funding was allocated. Otherwise, funding will be reallocated to other students.

### 3.4 Eligibility for Funding Beyond Five Years

Students in academic good standing are eligible for continued tuition funding and travel support in their sixth year, subject to availability of funding. There is no guarantee of stipend funding in the sixth year, but students may apply for sixth-year funding if they have met the eligibility requirements as spelled out in the College of Arts and Letters graduate student funding policy. Application for sixth-year stipends will be filed by eligible students, through the DGS, in mid-April of the fifth year. To determine eligibility, students must consult with the DGS, well before the April deadline. No student is eligible for tuition support beyond sixteen semesters of enrollment.

### 3.5 Residency Requirement

Tuition scholarships, stipends and travel subsidies are intended to support a student while in residence at Notre Dame, so that he or she can make full use of the various resources offered by the university, including faculty consultation and the library, and so that he or she can contribute to the community of scholarship made up by the graduate faculty and students in the Department. Thus, nonresident students will forfeit stipend and travel support, unless they are dissertators who leave campus in order to pursue their research (see also no. 5 under Degree Requirements). Any exceptions must be approved by the DGS and the Ph.D. committee.

### 3.6 Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistants (GA's) are expected to work twelve hours per week during the semester. Vacation time does not count: students receive all the normal breaks and holidays of the academic calendar. No work outside the University is to be required of GA's. GA's should be protected against last-minute assignments. They are to be used for academic purposes only. Graduate assistants and research assistants are restricted to a maximum load of nine credit hours in formal course work per semester.

### 3.7 Other Employment

No degree student may hold a job, on or off campus, without the express permission of the DGS and the Graduate School. Employment other than work for the Department must be cleared in advance or forfeiture of all financial support from the university may result.

### 3.8 Outside Sources of Funding

Students are encouraged to seek grants and fellowships from external sources of funding. While this funding may be used to augment a stipend received from the University, outside of exceptional circumstances or certain prestigious internal fellowships (e.g. Notebaert Premier Fellowships) the total amount of stipend support (including both external and internal sources) is limited to the equivalent of 1 1/2 times the stipend the student would be offered from the departmental fellowship for the nine months of the regular academic year. Per the College of Arts and Letters funding policy, there is no deferring of departmental funding, in whole or in part, to a later year in the doctoral program. Students are required to inform the DGS if they receive an outside grant or fellowship or forfeiture of all financial support from the University may result.

### 3.9 Notification

Decisions concerning financial support for the next academic year are communicated to students in writing in July.

### 3.10 Compliance with Federal Aid Regulations

Recipients of federal financial aid must comply with the standards of progress set by their respective departments for their particular programs of study. The Office of Financial Aid will notify students in writing when failure to maintain progress results in the possible loss of federal aid eligibility. Appeals indicating any mitigating circumstances must be made in writing to the associate director of financial aid.

## Part One: Academic Policies

### 3.11 Summary

<b>Year</b>	<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Available Sources of Funding</b>
1 (Fall)	Four courses Language examination(s)	Tuition and stipend
1 (Spring)	Four courses Language examination(s)	Tuition and stipend
1(Summer)	Language work	
2 (Fall)	Three courses Teaching and Research Assistantship Language examination(s)	Tuition and stipend Minimal travel
2 (Spring)	Three courses Teaching and Research Assistantship Language examination(s)	Tuition and stipend Minimal travel
2 (Summer)	Language work NOTE: All language examinations must be passed by the end of the summer Candidacy Topics developed	
3 (Fall)	Candidacy Topics Due Teaching and Research Assistantship	Tuition and stipend Minimal travel
3 (Spring)	Candidacy Examinations Teaching and Research Assistantship First draft of dissertation proposal	Tuition and stipend Minimal travel
3 (Summer)	Dissertation Proposal developed	
4 (Fall)	Dissertation Proposal Due Teaching Workshops	Tuition and stipend Moderate travel
4 (Spring)	Dissertation Teaching Workshops; syllabus prep	Tuition and stipend Moderate travel
4 (Summer)	Dissertation	
5 (Fall)	Dissertation Teach*	Tuition and stipend Maximum travel
5 (Spring)	Dissertation Teach*	Tuition and stipend Maximum travel
	*In year 5, teach at least one section, perhaps two	
5 (Summer)	Dissertation	
6	Dissertation Teach a second section (if only one taught in year 5)	Tuition (and perhaps stipend) Maximum travel

### 4. Academic Integrity

Integrity in scholarship and research is an essential characteristic of academic life and social structure in the University. Any activity that compromises the pursuit of truth and the advancement of knowledge besmirches the intellectual effort and may undermine confidence in the academic enterprise. A commitment to honesty is expected in all academic endeavors, and this should be continuously emphasized to students, research assistants, associates and colleagues by mentors and academic leaders. Beginning with those students who matriculated in 2012 or later, all Ph.D. students are required by the Graduate School to attend a half-day ethics workshop. This should be completed in the first year of studies.

The procedures for ensuring academic integrity in the Graduate School are distinct from those in the Undergraduate Honor Code.

Violations of academic integrity may occur in classroom work and related academic functions or in research/scholarship endeavors. Classroom-type misconduct includes the use of information obtained from another student's paper during an examination, plagiarism, submission of work written by someone else, falsification of data, etc. Violation of integrity in research/scholarship is deliberate fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing or reporting research or other deliberate misrepresentation in proposing, conducting, reporting or reviewing research. Misconduct does not include errors of judgment, errors in recording, selection or analysis of data, differences in opinions involving interpretation, or conduct unrelated to the research process. Misconduct includes practices that materially and adversely affect the integrity of scholarship and research.

Any person who has reason to believe that a violation of this policy has occurred, shall discuss it on a confidential basis with the department chair or director of the appropriate institute. If a perceived conflict of interest exists between the chair/director and the accused, the next highest academic officer shall be notified of the charge. The chair/director shall evaluate the allegation promptly. If it is determined that there is no substantial basis for the charge, then the matter may be dismissed with the fact of dismissal being made known to the complainant and to the accused if he or she is aware of the accusation. A written summary of charges, findings and actions shall be forwarded to the vice president for graduate studies and research as a matter of documentation. Otherwise, the chair will select an impartial panel consisting of three members, one of whom may be a graduate student, to investigate the matter. The chair will inform the accused of the charges. The panel will determine initially whether to proceed directly to a hearing to further investigate the case, or to dismiss the charges. If the panel decides to

proceed directly to a hearing, the hearing will be held within 10 days of the original notification. If the panel decides that further investigation is necessary, it shall immediately notify the chair. If it decides that a hearing is not warranted, all information gathered for this investigation will be destroyed. The utmost care will be taken to minimize any negative consequence to the accused.

The accused party must be given the opportunity to respond to any and all allegations and supporting evidence at the hearing. The response will be made to the appointed panel. The panel will make a final judgment, recommend appropriate disciplinary action, and report to the chair in writing. The report will include all of the pertinent documentation and will be presented within 30 days after meeting with the accused. Copies of the report are to be made available to the accused, the chair, and the vice president. If a violation is judged to have occurred, this might be grounds for dismissal from the University; research/scholarship violations might be reported to the sponsor of the research effort (e.g., NSF, NIH, Lilly Foundation, etc.), if appropriate.

If the student chooses to appeal, he or she must address the appeal in writing to the vice president for graduate studies and research within 10 days. The student has the right to appear before the vice president or his or her delegate. The vice president may decide to appoint an ad hoc committee to handle this appeal, if deemed necessary.

### **5. Policies on Harassment and Other Aspects of Student Life**

Sexual and discriminatory harassment and harassment in general are prohibited by the University. Definitions and policies regarding all forms of harassment and other aspects of student life and behavior are described in *duLac: A Guide to Student Life*, which is the University's description of student life policies and procedures. The codes, rules, regulations and policies that establish the official parameters for student life at Notre Dame are contained in *duLac*. Unless otherwise noted, the policies and procedures in *duLac* apply to all students, undergraduate, graduate, or professional, whether the behavior occurs on or off campus. Copies of *duLac* are provided to all students at the time of their enrollment and may also be obtained from the Office of Residence Life, located in the Main Building.

### **6. Time Limits**

The student must fulfill all doctoral requirements, including the dissertation and its defense, within eight years from the time of matriculation. Failure to complete any of the Graduate School or departmental requirements within the prescribed period will result in forfeiture of degree eligibility.

### 7. Appeal Process

All matters of interpretation or of appeal should be directed to the DGS. A student may appeal a decision of the DGS and/or the PhD Committee to the Chair of the Department. In cases in which the student is not satisfied with the results, a further appeal may be made to the Dean of the Graduate School, as detailed on the Graduate School website:

[http://graduateschool.nd.edu/assets/9047/info\\_appeal\\_procedure.pdf](http://graduateschool.nd.edu/assets/9047/info_appeal_procedure.pdf)

### 8. Dismissal Appeal Process

If a student is dismissed for academic reasons, he or she may appeal the program's decision. Complaints must be initiated by a written statement from the student within 10 business days from the time when the student is informed of dismissal. Decisions made on academic grounds can be appealed to the DGS or directly to the chair if the DGS has a conflict of interest in the matter of the appeal. A decision of the DGS may be appealed to the chair of the department. In that case the appeal letter should be directed to the chair. To hear the appeal, the department chair appoints an ad hoc committee composed of three members: him/herself and at least two faculty members unconnected factually with the case or the reasons for the appeal. If the department chair has been involved in the case, or if a program is outside the regular departmental structure (e.g., Ph.D. in Literature, HPS and the Medieval Institute), the appropriate associate dean of the college should appoint the committee and designate the person to serve as its chair.

The student's statement should indicate details on the nature of the problem, the date(s) the problem occurred, the grounds upon which the appeal is based, background information that the student considers important and the relief requested.

The appeals committee will promptly and thoroughly investigate the appeal to determine whether the relief requested is warranted. The investigation may include interviews and/or written statements from the student, any student witnesses, faculty or staff members who may be able to provide pertinent information about the facts, as well as a review of any pertinent documents.

In most situations, the appeals committee will complete the investigation in 30 business days. There may be some reports that cannot be investigated within 30 business days. In such cases, the chair of the appeals committee will communicate to the student that the investigation is going to take longer than 30 business days and will also include a statement indicating when the committee anticipates completing the investigation. The department chair will make his/her decision after considering the counsel of the appeals committee, and then will notify the student in writing of his/her decision. If the chair has been involved in the case, the decision will be made by the designated chair of the ad hoc committee.

# Part Two: Degree Requirements

## 1. Areas of Study

### 1.1 Six areas

There are six areas of study designated within the Department. Each area operates independently. Doctoral students are admitted to a specific area and not just to the Department in general, and normally remain within that area for the duration of their studies. In exceptional cases the Ph.D. committee (in consultation with the faculty in the proposed area of study) will consider a request for a transfer to another area. Such requests should be made before the end of the first semester of residence.

- Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity (CJA)

Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity covers four disciplines: the Hebrew Scriptures; Judaism, especially Second Temple and early Rabbinic Judaism; the New Testament and Graeco-Roman world; and other Christian sources up to the early medieval period.

- History of Christianity (HC)

History of Christianity explores the study of the history of Christianity in all its rich complexity. The program focuses on three major periods: ancient, medieval, and Reformation/modern.

- Liturgical Studies (LS)

Liturgical Studies seeks to advance the study and understanding of the worship life of the Christian church in its various traditions. It integrates three sub disciplines: liturgical history, liturgical theology, and ritual studies.

- Moral Theology/Christian Ethics (MT)

Moral Theology/Christian Ethics studies a number of sub-disciplines including foundational, medical, and social ethics. The program encourages interaction with philosophical ethics. While the program concentrates on the Roman Catholic tradition, it engages and is open to a variety of traditions.

- Systematic Theology (ST)

Systematic Theology engages in the disciplined and critical inquiry into the major tenets of Christian faith, especially as understood within Catholicism. The program addresses a wide range of concerns including the historical development of theology, constructive issues, and comparative theology.

- World Religions and World Church (WRWC)

The purposes of the concentration in World Religions and World Church (WRWC) is to explore new ways of thinking theologically about world religions, cultural diversity in the Church, and the history of interactions between the Church and the religions of the world. It has two tracks. One track engages the religions of the world from within a Christian theological paradigm for the purpose of studying those traditions with specific attention to their own particular historical contexts and modes of theological discourse, which is a necessary prerequisite to informed inter-religious dialogue. The second track studies the ways in which Christianity has become enculturated in contexts shaped largely by non-Christian religious traditions. To maintain an overall theological framework of study in both tracks, each student will have a formal minor in one of the other five areas, which will entail taking four courses in that area and taking all three of his or her minor area candidacy exam topics in that area (see below, under coursework and Candidacy Examinations).

### 1.2 Minor Areas of Concentration

Students are encouraged to use coursework and the minor area topics of their candidacy exams to develop a minor area of concentration. The following minor area of concentration has been formally defined by the Department:

- World Religions and World Church

The minor concentration in World Religions and World Church (WRWC) provides the intellectual foundations for engaging the religions of the world from within a Christian theological paradigm, whether as a grounding for more advanced study of their history and theology or for purposes of inter-religious engagement. The minor concentration has the following requirements:

- One course—normally Theo 60854, Modern Study of Religions, or the equivalent being offered for the academic year-- that introduces student to the diverse methods developed to study religion in the modern university, ranging from various social sciences (e.g., sociology, psychology, and anthropology) to assorted hermeneutical approaches (e.g., critical studies, literary theories, and performance theory).
- The student takes an additional three courses that either study another world religion or considers Christianity as it has become enculturated in contexts characterized by religious and/or cultural pluralism. Finally, the student prepares three topics for his or her candidacy exams under the direction of one of the faculty of the Department currently teaching in this field.
- Students interested in pursuing this minor concentration should consult with the area coordinator for WRWC.

### **2. Advisors**

#### **2.1 Initial Advisor**

The area coordinator acts as advisor during most of the first year of residency.

#### **2.2 Academic Advisor**

By the end of the second semester of the first year each student must select an advisor from the regular teaching and research faculty of the Department in his or her area of research interest. Ideally this person is the one most likely to be the dissertation director; however, it is possible to ask a member of the faculty other than the advisor to serve as the dissertation director when the student moves from candidacy examinations to the dissertation. Students select an advisor after appropriate consultation with faculty in their area of study to determine if their preferred advisor is available and willing to serve. The advisor's name will then be communicated on the appropriate form to the DGS.

#### **2.3 Responsibility**

Students are responsible for making sure that they satisfy all program requirements.

### **3. Course Work**

#### **3.1 Requirement**

All doctoral students are required to take fourteen three-hour courses during the first two years of residence.

#### **3.2 Distribution**

Eight of these courses must be from the area of specialization, although up to two can be taught by faculty outside the area of specialization. Each area sets up the course distribution requirements of these eight courses. Three courses must be taken outside the area of specialization, whether in other areas within the Department or from other departments in the university. Three are electives, except in the CJA program where three courses in ancient languages are required.

### 3.3 Concentrations

- Major Areas

CJA, HC, and WRWC have structured their programs to include fields for specialization within the concentration. These are:

- Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity
  - Hebrew Bible and Judaism
  - New Testament and Early Church
- History of Christianity
  - Early Church
  - Medieval Studies
  - Reformation Studies and modern

The eight 3-hour courses within the HC area are normally distributed over two of the fields of specialization (periods), whether 4/4 or 5/3. In the case where a student wishes to take a course in the third period, the distribution will be 4/3/1.

- World Religions and World Church
  - World Religions:
  - World Church

Eight courses will be taken within the area, according to the following general pattern:

- i. two courses are required: Modern Study of Religion and World Christianity (or Global Catholicism)
- ii. six further WRWC courses are to be taken as students choose in conversation with their advisor.

Four courses will be taken in the student's declared minor area of concentration, which will be one of the five other areas within the program. The two remaining electives will usually be language courses appropriate for the student's area of focus.

## Part Two: Degree Requirements

- Secondary Areas of Concentration

All students are encouraged to develop a second area of expertise through the three courses outside their major and the three electives. They may do so by selecting either a series of courses in a specific discipline or courses that have a common theme or hermeneutic from across multiple disciplines.

### 3.4 Courses

- Appropriate Levels

Doctoral students are expected to take courses at the 80-000-level. With the permission of his or her advisor, a doctoral student may take some course work at the 60-000 level to fill lacunae. The number of such courses, however, should not exceed three of the fourteen. In some cases, students may register for a special studies course at the 80-000-level and reach an agreement with the instructor on appropriate additional requirements.

- Special Studies Courses

A student who wishes to take for credit a course which is not offered in that semester may take it as a Special Studies course, but he or she must first obtain the consent of the instructor. Students should realize that such courses are additional loads for faculty members who may decline the request.

When a student and a member of the faculty have agreed to a Special Studies course, the student must obtain a Special Studies form from the office of the DGS. This form specifies the requirements of the course and serves as a contract between a student and the instructor. The form must be approved and signed by the DGS.

The number of Special Studies courses that a student takes may vary; however, only in exceptional circumstances will students be allowed to take more than two over the course of their program.

- Auditing Courses

Students are encouraged to audit courses after their second year of study. This privilege enables students to fill in lacunae or to take a course that they were unable to take during the two years' of their coursework.

### 4. Foreign Language Requirements

#### 4.1 Common Requirements

**All areas** within the Department require basic competence in two modern languages and one ancient language. The modern languages are typically but not exclusively French and German. In Systematic Theology the two modern languages may be chosen from French, German, or Spanish. In CJA, students would normally choose German and French or Modern Hebrew. Where a scholarly rationale can be demonstrated, it would be possible to petition for Italian or Spanish. In any of the areas another modern language may be substituted by petition to the DGS, who will consult with the relevant area coordinator. The ancient language normally should be either Greek or Latin, depending on the student's primary area of research. A basic knowledge is taken to mean the ability to translate an appropriate text with the aid of a dictionary. The decision on all exemptions should be made in consultation with and at the approval of the student's advisor.

#### 4.2 Area Requirements

**Some areas** have additional requirements. **Liturgical Studies** requires two ancient languages, both at the basic level. **History of Christianity** requires two ancient languages, one at the basic level, the other ancient language at an advanced level. **Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity** requires three ancient languages: one at an advanced level, one at an intermediate level, and one at the basic level. Knowledge at an advanced level assumes that a student can translate difficult texts, including poetry, without significant mistakes. Knowledge at an intermediate level presumes that students can translate moderately difficult texts without major mistakes. In addition to the reading competencies in two modern research languages and one classical language that are the general departmental requirements, **WRWC** also requires advanced knowledge of the chosen canonical language (e.g., Chinese, Pali, etc.) for students in the World Religions track, or advanced knowledge of the appropriate language for studying the region of the world church that a student in the World Church track has chosen. Besides a reading examination in this language, to be passed by the summer of the student's second year, greater facility in the language will be demonstrated by translating selected passages as a part of the student's candidacy exams.

### 4.3 Certification at the University of Notre Dame

These requirements must be met by passing examinations offered each year by the appropriate department at the University of Notre Dame or by the Theology Department. We do not accept language examinations from other institutions. Both the CJA Area and the WRWC Area require demonstration of further mastery of the language appropriate to the student's area of research by translating passages in that language as a part of the student's candidacy exam.

### 4.4 Theology Department Examinations

- Language Examinations at the Basic Level

The Theology Department's basic language examinations ask students to translate a text of 400 words within ninety minutes; students may use a dictionary. Examinations take place during the first week of November and either the last week of March or the first week of April.

- Area Language Examinations (CJA and HC)

An ancient language examination at the intermediate or advanced level in CJA or HC asks students to translate a text of 500 words within two hours. The final examinations of the Advanced Greek and Advanced Hebrew courses serve as the examinations, although the exam may also be taken at the time of the other departmental language examinations. A course grade of A or A- satisfies the advanced level requirement; a course grade of B+ or B satisfies the intermediate level requirement. Certification in Latin may only be earned by taking the language examination, and not by coursework. CJA students may satisfy other ancient language requirements by passing a one semester intensive course in the relevant language.

### 4.5 Time Limit

Language proficiency should be acquired as early as possible since Ph.D. level seminars presume the ability to work in original languages, and to consult research resources in foreign languages. Students must satisfy all language examinations by the end of the second summer of their residency. A failure to do so will jeopardize a student's standing in the program and eligibility for stipends and travel funding. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to sit for Candidacy exams if he or she has not satisfied all language requirements.

### 5. Residency

The minimum residency requirement for the Ph.D. degree is full-time status for four consecutive semesters (may include the summer session). The Department strongly recommends that students remain in residence for the duration of their program. Students who become non-resident forfeit stipend support and travel funding, unless they are dissertators who leave the university for the purposes of research.

### 6. Pedagogical Training

In addition to the requirements that are designed to prepare students for an active and productive life as scholars, the PhD program includes a program to prepare students as teachers. There are five requirements in the program.

- *First*, during the second and third years of the program, students serve faculty as Graduate Assistants (GA) for twelve hours per week. While duties vary, we ask each faculty member to employ the GA as an assistant in an undergraduate course, particularly in the student's third year in the program. Faculty are encouraged to introduce students to all aspects of undergraduate instruction, e.g., course planning, grading, presentations, advising.
- *Second*, during the Fall of the fourth year, students are required to take a series of workshops coordinated by the Department's teaching committee and staffed by regular members of the Department to introduce them to the two required courses in Theology, model syllabi, and the specific policies and concerns that the Department has for solid performance in these courses. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to teach unless he or she has satisfactorily completed the teaching workshops.
- *Third*, after a student has completed the Fall departmental workshops, she or he selects a syllabus as a model, enrolls in the Spring semester of the fourth year in THEO 83301 ("Theological Pedagogy"), and works with the instructor of the course (a member of the teaching committee) to revise the syllabus in light of his or her own goals and strengths. Once completed, the student will submit this syllabus to the teaching committee for approval.
- *Fourth*, the student selects a teaching mentor from the regular faculty. The mentor's responsibilities include the following: advising the student on all aspects of independent teaching, visiting the class room and debriefing the student on his or her performance during the initial semester of instruction on at least two occasions, and submitting to the teaching committee written evaluation of the student's teaching skills at the end of the student's course.
- *Fifth*, the teaching committee coordinates a series of optional workshops each year for fifth year students who are teaching their own courses. These workshops begin with a half-day meeting before each semester covering basic pedagogical principles helpful for teaching introductory theology courses and continue throughout the semester with a focus on common concerns arising out of students' courses.

The University has a teaching center, the Kaneb Center, that offers a variety of programs that deal with non discipline-specific issues in teaching. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these Kaneb Teaching Center offerings as well, to hone their skills as teachers. Consult the Kaneb Center's website for relevant programs and workshops, at <https://kaneb.nd.edu/>.

### **7. Candidacy Examinations**

#### **7.1 Structure of the Candidacy Examinations**

The candidacy examination consists of two parts: a written component and an oral component. The written part of the examination normally precedes the oral part. In total, the examination should be comprehensive. Successful passage indicates that, in the judgment of the faculty, the student has an adequate knowledge of the basic literature, problems and methods of his or her field.

The rationale for the examination structure is to provide students with an occasion to work independently on small projects before undertaking the larger project of the dissertation. The projects can either be areas of interest that have arisen in course work but which students did not have time to pursue, or areas that were not covered by course work but which the students need to address to fill lacunae in their own field.

#### **7.2 Time in Program**

A student takes candidacy exams in the second semester after completing course work, i.e., normally in March of the third year. Any variation in this schedule must be approved by the Ph.D. committee. It is possible for a student to take the examinations a semester early if he or she enters the program with exceptional preparation. For good reason, the committee may permit a student to defer the examinations from March to October, but only in very exceptional circumstances will a second deferral be allowed. Usually, a deferral to October will result in a student being placed on restricted financial eligibility, and a second deferral will come with a loss of stipend.

### 7.3 Topics

In consultation with his or her advisor and examination committee, the student selects ten topics on which he or she will be examined. Seven of these should come from the major area of interest and three from outside the major. At least one of the topics in the major area must explore a possible dissertation question. Each area within the Department determines the specific scope of the examinations. A certain breadth should be reflected in the topics studied. The topics should explore diverse periods, texts, and methods. It is the responsibility of the advisor to ensure that the topics are sufficiently broad.

- Form

For each of the ten topics, students should formulate in a single paragraph the problem that they intend to investigate. This should be accompanied by a brief bibliography of works that the student is prepared to study. It is imperative that the bibliography is selective since the student will be expected to have studied all materials in the bibliography. The bibliographies should include representative works in foreign languages.

- Approval

- Initial Submission

Early in the semester prior to the one in which the student will take exams, topics and bibliographies must be submitted to the DGS, after the student's advisor has approved them. The DGS will distribute them to a committee of four faculty members: the advisor, a second member from the student's major field (the chair of the committee), one from outside the major area, and a fourth member to be chosen in consultation with the student and advisor. The second member from the major field (the chair of the committee), not the advisor, communicates with the committee, convenes a meeting of the committee if necessary, and reports its decision to the DGS.

- Revisions and Second Submission

Within one month after the topics have been submitted, the chair of the committee must inform the DGS and the student whether the program of study has been approved or what modifications will be necessary. If revisions are required, it is the responsibility of the chair to communicate the required revisions to the student and certify that they have been completed. The revised topics and bibliographies must be re-submitted to the chair within two weeks. The chair will again communicate with the committee and convene a meeting if necessary. The chair will inform the DGS when the bibliographies are finally approved. Students must submit a copy of the final examination topics to the DGS office.

- Notification

The DGS will formally notify the student when the topics are approved. The DGS has the right to return proposed examinations to the committee and the student if they do not meet the above guidelines.

- Program of Study

The topics and bibliographies, once approved, constitute the program of study to which the student is committed, and later the exclusive matter for the candidacy examinations.

- Late Revisions

Any revisions of the topics and bibliographies that have arisen in the course of research must be duly noted and approved by the committee before the final submission. It is the advisor's responsibility to inform the committee of any changes and obtain their consent. Finally, approved topics and bibliographies must be submitted to the Ph.D. Office one month before the examinations are to be administered, as required by the timetable.

### 7.4 Examination Process

- Dates

The specific dates for meeting all of the requirements of the examination process (i.e., the dates of the initial and final submissions of the topics) will be clearly posted at least a year in advance outside the Ph.D. Office (123 Malloy).

The examinations are administered in March and October.

- Examination Board

The faculty members who approved the examination topics will ordinarily be appointed to the board of examiners. The examination board consists of the advisor, one examiner from the major field, one from outside the major field, and a fourth to be chosen in consultation with the student and advisor. For the written examination, an additional examiner is appointed from either the major field or the areas outside the major, as is required in order to produce a total of three examiners in the major and two outside the major field.

Board members are nominated by the DGS on behalf of the Department and are appointed by the Graduate School. Boards will be posted two weeks before the examinations are to be administered. Students have the right to raise questions concerning the examiners with the DGS.

- Time

Written exams for the student's major area take place on the first and second day of the exam period (usually on Monday and Tuesday), with a two-hour period in the morning and another in the afternoon. On the third day of the examinations (typically Wednesday) the student is examined on his or her topics outside the major area during a two-hour written exam period during the morning and another in the afternoon.

- Aids

In fields that are textually based, students may request permission from their committee and the DGS to bring copy/copies of the appropriate ancient texts to the examination. These may be either in translation or in the original language. All such texts must be free of notes. The specific translations or editions must be approved at least one week in advance of the examination. The CJA area has specified this policy further in the following way: Students may bring and use an unmarked Hebrew Bible, Greek New Testament, and/or Greek Septuagint. Other texts to be translated will be provided by the examiner. Any other texts that will be used must be approved in advance by the exam committee, and must be in the original language (no translations). ***At the time of their first submission, CJA students must submit a list of texts that they propose to use as aids for approval by their exam committees.***

- Prerequisite

The student must pass both written examinations (major and outside the major) in order to qualify to take the oral examination.

- Grading

For the written examination, the readers will grade the answers, on a pass/fail basis, on the merits of the written work of the examination alone. No regard should be given to other aspects of the student's work. Two passing votes are required in both the major and the fields outside the major. In the event of a deadlock in the areas outside the major, the DGS will appoint a third examiner with competence in the area of the deadlock. A decision will be made on the basis of that person's judgment.

- Oral Examination

An oral examination lasting an hour and a half will be administered. One senior or tenured member of the committee serves as the administrator of the exam; normally this will be the advisor.

Examinations normally consist of two rounds of questions. Examiners may ask questions based on either responses to the written exams or on examination topics not covered by the written examinations.

- **Grading**

After completion of the examination, the administrator calls for a discussion followed by a vote of the examiners. The examination will be graded solely on the basis of the student's performance in the oral examination, without regard to performance in the written examination. Three affirmative votes are required for a pass. The Graduate School records either a pass or a fail. The Department of Theology makes distinctions among grades of passing. Students who are judged by a majority of the examiners to have passed with distinction may receive a grade of "passed with honors" or "passed with high honors." It is the responsibility of the advisor to communicate this grade to the student. The administrator sends a written report of the overall quality of the oral examination and the results of the voting immediately to the Graduate School. The DGS and the Graduate School officially notify the student of the results of the candidacy examination.

### 7.5 Failures

- **Failures on the Written Examinations**

If the candidate fails in the areas outside the major, he or she must be re-examined in that field. If the student fails in the major field, the DGS may, on the recommendation of the committee, authorize a re-examination in both the major and in the areas outside the major, but not a partial re-examination.

- **Failures on the Oral Examination**

If a student fails the oral examination, the examining board informs the DGS as to whether or not the student should retake the examination. The student is not required to re-take the written examination in this case.

- **Second Examination**

A candidate who is required to re-take all of the written examination or the oral examination, may not do so until the next time the candidacy examinations are administered. A candidate who is required to re-take only the area(s) outside the major may do so after two months by arrangement with the committee. An authorization for a retake must be approved by the Graduate School. A second failure results in forfeiture of degree eligibility and is recorded on the candidate's permanent record.

### 7.6 Award of Master's Degree to Doctoral Students

A doctoral student may receive a master's degree when leaving the program under several sets of circumstances.

- **Voluntary Withdrawal**

If a student in the Ph.D. program withdraws before candidacy exams, but after completing forty-two credit hours, the M.A. degree can be awarded after successful completion of the remaining requirements of the M.A. program. A student who decides not to go on after passing the written and oral examinations may receive an M.A. degree, provided that he or she has met the remaining requirements of the program.

- **Involuntary Withdrawal**

In the case that a student fails some portion of the candidacy examination, and the examining board does not recommend that the examination be re-taken, several options are available.

If the student fails the written examination, the examining board, convened by its chair, may vote either to 1) recommend to the director of the M.A. program that the student be considered for admission to candidacy for the masters degree, in which case the remaining requirements for the degree will be determined by the director of the M.A. program; or 2) fail the student at both the master's and Ph.D. levels.

If the student passes the written, but fails the oral examination, the examining board may vote to recommend the awarding of the masters degree.

### 8. Admission to Candidacy

Admission to candidacy is a prerequisite to receiving any graduate degree. To qualify for admission to doctoral candidacy, a student must: 1) be in a doctoral program; 2) have been continuously enrolled in the program without withdrawal; 3) complete the departmental course work requirement with a cumulative average of 3.0 or better; 4) pass the written and oral parts of the doctoral candidacy examination; 5) have an approved dissertation proposal. It is the responsibility of the student to apply for admission to candidacy by submitting the appropriate form to the Ph.D. Office. After the student's dissertation proposal has been approved, the form will be placed in his or her mailbox; or, the student may pick it up in person at the Ph.D. Office.

### 9. The Dissertation

#### 9.1 Dissertation Directors

Dissertation directors are normally chosen from among the tenured members of the teaching and research faculty of the Department of Theology. There are circumstances when it is possible to have a co-director who is not a tenured member of the Department -- one who is, for example, an assistant professor in the Department of Theology, a professional specialist in the Department, a tenured member of the Department who leaves the university during the writing of the dissertation, or a faculty member from another department. All co-directors must be approved by the DGS and the Graduate School.

#### 9.2 Dissertation Topic

Selection of the dissertation topic should be done in conversation with the faculty member whom the student chooses as director.

#### 9.3 Dissertation Proposal

- The Nature of a Proposal

The purpose of the proposal is to demonstrate that the dissertator has a clear concept of an important issue, a specific procedure that will guide the research, and a probable chance for a successful result.

Proposals are not finished products. They are written at the beginning of research. Since findings often change the way in which problems and solutions are perceived, modifications may be necessary. When this occurs, the dissertator must have the approval of the dissertation director and the board. If the changes are major (i.e., involve a reorientation of the dissertation), the director may ask for a new proposal. If they reflect significant adjustments to the original proposal, a letter explaining the changes should be submitted to the office of the DGS. It is understood that some alterations routinely occur, e.g., the rearrangement of chapters, the addition of a chapter, the omission of a chapter. These do not require written notification unless there is a disagreement among the members of the committee. The proposal should be 10-20 pages in length and should include the following elements:

- A brief statement of the *status quaestionis* which serves as background for the contribution of the proposed dissertation (NOTE: The review should be the length of similar reviews in articles; it should not be the first chapter of the dissertation.)
- A clear thesis statement that identifies the contribution of the proposed dissertation
- The methodology that the dissertation will use
- The structure of the argumentation of the dissertation as it unfolds in chapters
- A preliminary bibliography

- **Deadline**

A first draft of the proposal is due on the last day of class of the semester of the candidacy examinations. A complete proposal is due by the first day of class of the semester following candidacy examinations. Students who submit proposals on time receive priority in extra travel funding.

- **Late Proposals**

If a student fails to submit the proposal by the end of the first semester following candidacy examinations, he or she will automatically be placed on academic probation. The Graduate School policy stipulates that if the proposal is not approved by the end of the 8th semester, i.e., the end of the 4th year, the student will forfeit all financial support from the University. If the proposal is not approved by the end of the fifth year after matriculation, the student faces dismissal from the program.

### 9.4 The Committee

- Standard Committees

The student's dissertation committee normally will be drawn from the examining board, although it may be changed with the approval of the director. The minimum committee size is three members: the director and two readers. The standard committee size in Theology is four: the director and three readers. The director and one of the readers must come from the student's area of concentration. Students are encouraged to add a third reader from outside his or her area of concentration if, in consultation with the student's advisor, it is judged that the dissertation's subject requires it. A third reader may also be added from another department in the University with the approval of the DGS. In rare cases the committee may consist of five members (for example, a committee with two co-directors and three readers). In such a case, at least three of the members should come from the student's area of concentration.

- Co-Directors

In all cases where there are co-directors, there must be at least two additional readers bringing the total number of co-directors and readers to four. At least two of these four must be from the student's area of concentration, including at least one of the co-directors.

- Outside Readers

In some cases students may request that a faculty member from another institution serve on the committee. He or she may serve as an outside reader in either an unofficial or official capacity. All such appointments must have the approval of the DGS.

The unofficial external reader reads and comments on the dissertation in the same way that the official readers do, but since such readers are unofficial, they do not sign the proposal and need not be present at the defense. If they choose to attend the defense, they may sit on the oral examination board, question the student, and vote. Even though there is now one additional member of the committee (bringing it to four or five members), two failing votes still constitute a failure of the defense. Whether the outside reader elects to attend the defense or not, the student should acknowledge the contribution of the reader in the credits. The Department does not pay for any expenses incurred by unofficial, outside readers.

In rare circumstances an official reader may come from outside the University. Such a reader requires the approval of the DGS and the Chair of the Department. Approval depends on the academic standing of the scholar and the absence of sufficient Notre Dame faculty with the appropriate qualifications to judge the quality of the dissertation. Official outside readers may not serve as directors or co-directors of dissertations. The Department will not pay for the travel expenses of the outside reader for meetings of the committee, including the mid-dissertation review and the defense. In no case may a student pay for the services of an outside reader.

- Appointment

The director makes a recommendation to the DGS concerning the composition of the committee after consultation with the student. Responsibility for appointing the committee rests solely with the DGS.

### 9.5 Approval of the Proposal

- Submission

The student must work out the proposal with the director of the dissertation. After the director signs the proposal, the student submits four copies to the PhD Office for evaluation by the dissertation committee. If the committee has four members the student should submit five copies.

- Evaluation

The DGS will ask the committee to complete the assessment of the proposal within a specified period of time (usually two weeks to one month). The student's director will convene a meeting of the committee to evaluate the proposal. If revisions are required, the director will determine whether a second meeting is necessary. A fully agreed-upon text must exist before the readers give their approval.

- Commitment of the Committee

Committee members who approve the proposal are expected, insofar as possible, to continue through the dissertation process until the student graduates. In the event that a faculty member leaves the University of Notre Dame, he or she will cease to be a member of the committee unless he or she is the director. If a director leaves, a co-director who is on the faculty here will be appointed.

- Approval

The director must sign and submit the appropriate form for approval to the DGS. The DGS will inform the student that the proposal has been officially approved. If revisions are required, the student will submit the final proposal to the Ph.D. office, fully approved by the committee.

### 9.6. Direction of the Dissertation

- Director and Committee Members

It must be emphasized that the director is the director of the dissertation, and that the readers are not directors but assessors. Correspondence or critique from the readers is to be addressed to the director, who will communicate it to the student after consultation with the reader(s). The readers must agree that there may be legitimately different approaches to scholarship and that their contribution is to insure quality, not necessarily their own particular brand of scholarship.

- Progress

The director should find ways to keep the readers advised and to elicit critique from them periodically throughout the development of the dissertation.

- Mid-Dissertation Review

When a dissertator has completed approximately half of the dissertation, a mid-dissertation review must be conducted. The dissertator distributes what he or she has written so far to the readers. Then the dissertator and the committee meet to discuss the shape that the dissertation is taking. This offers dissertators the opportunity to address major shifts in the dissertation that research has generated and ensures that the committee and the dissertator are agreed on the direction of the dissertation. It also provides the committee with an opportunity to interact as a group with the student and to express any concerns that the student needs to take into account before submitting the final version of the dissertation to the readers prior to the defense. The dissertation director should inform the DGS when the mid-dissertation review has been conducted. No dissertation may be submitted for a defense unless a midcourse review has taken place.

It is expected that the mid-dissertation review will be held in the student's 5<sup>th</sup> year in the doctoral program, preferably in the Fall semester. If a mid-dissertation review is not held in the 5<sup>th</sup> year, there must be a meeting of the full committee with the student before the end of the Spring semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> year: to discuss the dissertation and reasons for slow progress, and to provide the committee the opportunity to offer advice that might prove helpful in moving the

dissertation forward. As is the case with the mid-dissertation review, responsibility for scheduling this meeting rests with the student. The dissertation director should inform the DGS when this meeting has been conducted. This meeting is *not* in lieu of a mid-dissertation review; the mid-dissertation review must be held once enough writing has been completed to warrant a review.

- Progress Notification

Dissertators are required to keep their directors informed of their progress. As noted above (§ 9.4), each dissertator should write a brief report to the DGS (either by letter or email) at the beginning of each academic year detailing his or her progress over the past year and outlining the work he or she plans to complete in the coming year. Failure to maintain progress is grounds for dismissal from the program.

### 9.7 Defense of the Dissertation

- Deadlines for Graduation

The finished dissertation, incorporating revisions up to that point, and signed by the director, must be submitted in three neat copies (four copies for a committee of four members) to the DGS -- usually by September 1 for January graduation, by February 1 for May graduation, or by May 1 for August graduation. (Students need to check with the Ph.D. office for exact dates since these dates sometimes vary from year to year.) The student is expected to abide by these dates; if, however, for some extraordinary reason, the student would like to request an extension, she/he must submit a written request to the DGS. Students must also submit an additional copy to the Graduate School for preliminary review of the format. This copy may be submitted electronically as a PDF or delivered as a printed document. The Graduate School will check dissertations to ensure that they conform only to the UMI guidelines for formatting.

- Approval for the Defense

Readers normally have two to four weeks to read the dissertation, decide whether it is ready to be defended, and so indicate on the Reader's Report to the Graduate School. Reader approval of the dissertation for defense does not imply reader agreement or support; it implies reader acknowledgment that the dissertation is an academically sound and defensible scholarly product. Only a dissertation that has been unanimously approved for defense by all the readers may

be defended. Even though the dissertation has been approved for defense, revisions may be required. If defects in the dissertation come to light at the defense, the candidate may be asked to revise the dissertation before it is accepted by the Graduate School and the degree is conferred. In that case, it will be the responsibility of the dissertation director, or such person as the committee may appoint, to report to the Graduate School that such revisions have been completed satisfactorily.

- Scheduling of the Defense

Once the DGS is notified by the readers that the dissertation has been approved for defense, the Ph.D. Office will schedule the defense.

- Rationale

In defending the dissertation, the doctoral candidate supports its claims, procedures and results. The defense is the traditional instrument that enables the candidate to explore with the dissertation committee the dissertation's substantive and methodological force. In this way, the candidate and the committee confirm the candidate's scholarly grasp of the chosen research area.

- Examination Board

The examination board will consist of three examiners, unless there are co-directors, an additional reader, or an outside reader, in which instances it will consist of four. The examiners will be the director or co-directors of the dissertation and the readers. One of the readers may participate at a distance by speakerphone, televideo link, or similar technology. In such a case it is also possible for a surrogate to take the place of the absent faculty member. The surrogate must be approved by the student, the director, and the DGS. One senior or tenured member of the committee serves as the administrator of the defense; normally this will be the advisor.

- Structure of the Defense

The dates, times, and places for dissertation defenses will be publicly posted at least one week prior to the defense. All interested parties will be invited to attend. The oral defense shall be held in public for no longer than 1 ½ hours. Before the defense proper, the examining board will meet to decide the specific format of the defense. The normal format is as follows. The candidate begins the defense with a statement (approximately fifteen minutes in length) in which he or she reviews the basic thesis and argument of the dissertation. The board then examines the candidate in two rounds of questions. For a three-member committee, each examiner has fifteen minutes in the first round of questioning and five minutes in the second round. Following the questions of the board, the administrator may offer anyone in attendance the opportunity to ask a question. These may take up to fifteen minutes. After the questioning is complete, the board excuses everyone from the room in order to discuss and vote on the defense.

- Grading

After the examination is completed, the administrator calls for a discussion followed by a vote of the dissertation committee. The vote is pass or fail; no further distinctions are made. At least two votes out of three (or three votes out of four, or four votes out of five) will be required to pass a candidate; two negative votes constitutes failure, no matter what the size of the committee. The administrator sends a written report of the overall quality of the defense and the voting results immediately to the Graduate School.

- Failure

The Department of Theology does not permit second opportunities to defend the dissertation. A student who fails the defense is awarded an M.A. degree.

### 9.8 Final Copies

Students should follow Graduate School Guidelines for submission of final copies of the dissertation. These are available on the Graduate School's website, at

<http://graduateschool.nd.edu/resources-for-current-students/dt/dt-checklist/>