Course Description: The class is designed to prepare students to write a Master's thesis or prepare a Master's project. The course will focus on research skills: building a bibliography, constructing a focused thesis or project statement, forming a proposal, managing the thesis/project, and selecting an advisor and second reader.

The thesis/project is a two-semester process for most students. This course is design to build a strong foundation on which to build a strong thesis/project. The second semester is generally focused on writing the thesis or developing the project.

NOTE: M.Div. students who have elected to do a 3 credit hour project will receive an IP at the end of the semester to indicate that the project is in process. While it is possible that the project could be completed within the semester, it is unlikely.

Course Delivery: This class will follow a traditional format that most students are familiar with at BTS. In addition, however, this course will be web based, which means the class will be closely connected with Moodle, a web based system. This syllabus and all of the course assignments will be listed on the Moodle site under the course title. All assignments will be submitted via Moodle and all grades will be returned via Moodle. Links to documents and other web sites will be given on the Moodle. Please see Danielle or David for assistance with Moodle.

Course Goals: The goals for the course are simply; construct a high quality proposal for a thesis or project, with a rich bibliography, detailed outline for a complete thesis/project and the selection of a primary advisor and secondary reader.

Course Requirements:
1. The major requirement for this class is a completed thesis/project proposal. All other requirements will lead back to this primary goal. The final proposal will likely be the introduction to your thesis/project.
2. Each student will form a 5-10 page bibliography that will include: books, articles, web sites, and possibly podcast, interviews, and case studies.
3. Each student will present their thesis proposal to the class for review and critique.
4. Each student will set up at least a one-hour meeting with Laurie McQuarrie, the BTS librarian. Laurie will introduce each student to resources pertaining to their project/thesis.
5. Each student will develop an outline for the completion of the thesis/project. The outline will include key dates for project/thesis evaluation.
6. Read all texts assigned in the course.

**Course Texts:**


**Course Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hour meeting with Librarian</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis/Project Outline</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Proposal</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>550</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A = 95%
A- = 92%
B = 85%
B- = 82%
C = 75%
C- = 72%

**Thesis/Project Requirement**
The completed thesis should be 50-75 pages of text that does not include bibliography and notes. A complete project should contain a 25-page reflection and analysis of the work.

**NOTE LATE POLICY**
All late work will be graded down 10% a week!! After five weeks, the assignment is graded as 0.
No work will be taken after the final class of the regular semester December 13th.

**IMPORTANT DATES**
Last day to drop or add a class September 21st.
Last day to withdraw for a class Nov. 5th.
Last day of the regular semester December 14th.
Class Outline

Week One: Sept. 7

**No Formal Class.** Assignment: Prepare at least one thesis/project idea to discuss in class in week two. This is not a free day off! Library staff will be in both locations to assist student. They will introduce you to the library, perhaps again, and direct you to resources.

Read: *Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers.*

Week Two: Sept. 14

Introduction to the overall course and focus on the week one assignment. The key to success in the course and in turn the thesis/project is to get your topic settled early on in the course. The class will be a round table conversation that will allow the students to serve as critical voices of reflection.

Week Three: Sept. 21 Laurie McQuarrie

Research Methods and Citations; Building a Bibliography. This is a key session that will save you time later.

Read Turabian.

Week Four: Sept. 28

No class: Refine thesis or project

Week Five: Oct. 5

**Thesis/Project Outline Due**

Identifying an advisor and second reader; Plagiarism; Resource Development. The thesis/project advisor is a central guide through the process. Choose wisely and realize that faculty are limited and cannot take every student who desires his or her leadership.

Week Six: Break Week

Week Seven: Oct. 19

**Bibliography Due.**

Week Eight: Oct. 26

No Class, but Steve and Laurie will be available for conversations.

Week Nine: Nov. 2

No Class, but Steve and Laurie will be available for conversations.

Week Ten: Nov. 9

**Thesis/Project Proposals are due.** Class presentations on proposals.

Each student will present his or her proposal to the class for reflection. Faculty Meet on the 14th for review process.
Week Eleven: Nov. 16
Review Faculty comments on proposals. Discuss questions and issues surrounding comments.

Week Twelve: Thanksgiving Break

Week Thirteen: Nov. 30
Conversation/Questions over thesis/projects

Week Fourteen: Dec. 7
No Class

Week Fifteen: Dec. 14
No Class. Final revised proposals due for grade evaluation.

Thesis/Project Spring Term Deadlines
From Thesis Handbook

**Thesis Deadlines**
- **January** Writing
- **February 1:** Writing
- **March 4:** First Draft due to the advisor.
- **March 15:** Draft returned to the student. The paper should be almost complete.
- **April 5:** Second draft due to advisor. This should be a complete project or thesis.
- **April 15:** The student should receive feedback from the advisor and second reader, along with final suggestions for rewrite, etc.
- **May 6:** Final draft should be in the advisor’s hands with a copy for the second reader.
- **May 17:** Submit the final in correct form to the library.

**Project Deadlines**
- **January:** Project under way
- **February 1:** Writing
- **March 4:** First Draft due to the advisor.
• **March 15:** Draft returned to the student. The paper should be almost complete.

• **April 5:** Second draft due to advisor. This should be as complete a project or thesis as possible.

• **April 15:** The student should receive feedback from the advisor and second reader, along with final suggestions for rewrite, etc.

• **May 6:** Final draft should be in the advisor’s hands with a copy for the second reader.

• **May 17:** Submit the final in correct form to the library.