

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THM PROGRAM HANDBOOK

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

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ThM Program Handbook

Calvin Theological Seminary

Introduction

The Master of Theology (ThM) is a post-MDiv/MTS degree program designed for advanced study and academic research in a specialized area of the theological curriculum. It gives seminary graduates the opportunity to extend their education in a particular field or to prepare for doctoral-level work. The program allows students to concentrate in one of a number of areas. The program can be completed in one or two years. The capstone project in the program is either a thesis or a major research paper.

ThM Program Learning Outcomes

The ThM program is designed to achieve learning outcomes that can be summarized under the categories of message, person, context, and goal:

1. MESSAGE

- 1.1 Students have academic mastery in a specific theological discipline.
- 1.2 Students can engage in sound scholarship that exhibits independent inquiry, academic research, critical analysis, and scholarly writing.
- 1.3 Students can articulate both their own tradition's perspective on their area of specialization and the strengths and weaknesses of other theological approaches.

2. PERSON

- 2.1 Students exhibit the fruit of the Spirit by providing thoughtful, fair, and respectful analyses and interpretations that recognize the strengths of positions with which they disagree and the weaknesses of positions with which they agree.

3. CONTEXT

- 3.1 Students can persuasively articulate their own theological positions as well as engage in informed, respectful dialogue with other points of view.
- 3.2 Through exposure to fellow students from around the world and to scholarly literature representing diverse points of view, students appreciate the ways in which various cultural and religious contexts challenge and enrich theological reflection.

4. GOAL

- 4.1 Students engage in theology that strengthens the church's biblical and theological understanding and its ministry.

Concentrations

Because the ThM program is an advanced degree that enables students to concentrate in areas of interest, each student must meet the requirements of one of the concentrations. As noted in the section on “ThM Program Curriculum,” some concentrations (indicated by *) have specific requirements beyond the general curriculum. The following concentrations are currently offered:

- Old Testament
- Ancient Near Eastern Languages and Literature*
- New Testament
- History of Christianity
- Systematic Theology
- Philosophical and Moral Theology
- Pastoral Care*
- Leadership
- Preaching
- Worship
- Evangelism
- Educational Ministry

Admission to the ThM Program

Admission to the ThM program requires the following:

- A Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, Bachelor of Divinity, or an equivalent degree, with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 (B), from an institution whose accreditation is recognized by the US Department of Education, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or a Canadian provincial quality assurance agency, or from institutions outside of the US or Canada that meet standards comparable to those of the Association for Theological Schools.
- Completion of sufficient prior study in your intended area of specialization. (Some students may be advised to take one or more extra courses in their area of specialization.)
- Transcript evidence of sufficient study in Hebrew and Greek:
 - Applicants with a concentration in an area other than biblical studies must have at least two courses in the biblical languages; either two courses in one of the languages or one course in each language.
 - Applicants with a concentration in Old Testament must have a minimum of two language courses in Hebrew. In addition they should have at least one language course in Greek. Applicants are required to take a proficiency test in Hebrew as part of the admission process.
 - Applicants with a concentration in New Testament must have a minimum of two language courses in Greek. In addition, they should have at least one language course in Hebrew. Applicants are required to take a proficiency test in Greek as part of the admission process.

- For OT and NT students, if a proficiency test indicates the need for greater competency in Hebrew or Greek, the student must take an additional course in that language at Calvin Seminary. ThM students may retake the proficiency test a maximum of one additional time at least two months after the first test (with a charge for retaking the test).
- For students for whom English is a second language, a TOEFL score that meets Calvin Seminary's requirements (a minimum internet-based TOEFL score of 80 total, with 23 in the writing section, OR a minimum overall IELTS score of 6.5, with at least a 6.5 in the writing section).
- Completion of all admission requirements before entering the ThM program (with limited exceptions for someone concurrently completing an MDiv or MTS program at Calvin Seminary).

Tuition, Fees, and Financial Aid

Tuition for ThM study in the year 2018-19 is \$768 per credit hour. Tuition charges are adjusted annually.

The following fees apply to students in the ThM program. These fees are adjusted from time to time. Fees for 2018-2019 are listed below; the Calvin Seminary website lists current fees:

| | |
|---|------|
| Fee to accompany application for admission | \$25 |
| Enrollment deposit (applied to first tuition bill) | 250 |
| Late registration fee | 50 |
| Fee for late payment of tuition | 50 |
| Fee for retaking a Hebrew or Greek proficiency test | 100 |
| Graduation fee | 121 |

Calvin Seminary has a limited amount of financial aid for students in the ThM program. Students are encouraged to explore various options of financial support for studying in the program. Students must apply for financial aid by March 1 for admission for the fall semester and by November 15 for admission for the spring semester.

Advising and Registration Process

ThM students should meet with the ThM Program Adviser at the beginning of their program, then as frequently as needed for purposes of advising. Early in their program, students will meet with a professor in their area of concentration. Students should maintain a connection with faculty in their area of concentration throughout their program.

ThM students register for courses in the same way that other Calvin Seminary students do.

Full-Time Status

ThM students must take at least 3 credit hours per semester in order to be considered full-time.

ThM Program Curriculum

The ThM program requires a total of 21 credit hours, which can be completed by following either the thesis option or the major research paper option. The program has the following requirements:

- One course in research methodology (801): 3 credits (This course is graded credit/no credit.)
- Three electives in the department of specialization: 9 credits
- One of the following options: 9 credits
 - **Two general electives** in any department (6 credits); and a **major research paper** in the department of specialization (3 credits); or
 - **One general elective** in any department (3 credits); and a **thesis** in the department of specialization (6 credits), with an oral exam based on the thesis

ThM Course Options

1. ThM students may select courses with numbers from 500-699, 800-899, and 403, 404, and 412 (other 300- or 400-level courses may be taken with special permission). All of these courses are 3 credits for ThM students (sometimes by adding a research paper or other assignment to an MDiv/MTS/MA elective).
2. ThM students may also take independent study courses if they demonstrate sufficient reasons. Independent study courses must be approved by the ThM Program Adviser.
3. ThM students may register for PhD courses (900-level electives) if they have established a GPA of 3.3 (B+) or better after one semester and if there is room in the course (PhD courses are limited to 12 students).

GPA Requirements

In order to graduate, a student must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 (B). Students who wish to write a ThM thesis (6 credits) must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.3 (B+) in their area of specialization.

Special Concentration Requirements

For students specializing in Ancient Near Eastern Languages and Literature (ANE), two of the three electives in the area of specialization must be Ancient Near Eastern languages (Akkadian, Aramaic, Ugaritic). Students are encouraged to take four electives in the area of ANE when possible. In addition to courses in Akkadian, Aramaic, and Ugaritic, ANE courses include Comparative Semitic Grammar, Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Law, and The Art of Hebrew Narrative.

Students specializing in Pastoral Care must take 6 credits of clinical training accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). For the requirements in that program, please contact the Professor of Pastoral Care.

Extensions for Incomplete Work

Like all students at Calvin Seminary, ThM students are expected to complete their work for each course by the deadlines in the course syllabus. The Student Handbook includes the following provision for extending deadlines up to one month beyond the end of the term:

It is within the discretion of the instructor, upon request from the student for acceptable reasons, to extend the final due date for course work by three week days. The student may receive a further extension of one calendar month and a grade of "incomplete" only when the instructor of that course has approved and a signed a contract by the last day of classes. All contracts for incompletes are reported to the Admissions & Standards committee. A contract must include the nature of the request, the new due date for all work, and the grounds for the extension. Acceptable reasons are limited to unusual considerations such as illness, hardship, or emergency. Verification may be required.

The CTS E-news will include a notice before the end of each semester with information about how to apply for an extension. Requests for an extension must be submitted no later than the last day of the academic term.

Options in the Event of a Failing Grade

A student who fails a course has the following options in order to demonstrate competence:

1. The student may retake the course. The F grade will remain on the student's transcript but will not be calculated into the GPA. The new grade will also be on the transcript and will be calculated into the GPA.
2. The student may take an independent study with the professor of the course. The professor would decide the number of credits for the independent study based on the amount of work that the student needs to do. The number of credits may be less than or equal to the credits of the original course. The independent study would be graded on a credit/no credit basis; receiving a credit grade would be necessary in order to demonstrate competence and to receive credit for completing the initial course. The initial F received in the course would remain on the student's transcript and be calculated into their GPA. The professor and student would agree on a deadline for completing the independent study; meeting the deadline would be a condition for passing the course.

Combining the ThM and MDiv or MTS Programs

Students in the MDiv or MTS program at Calvin Theological Seminary may begin the ThM program while finishing requirements for the MDiv or MTS program. Ordinarily, students do not begin the ThM program before the last year of their MDiv or MTS program.

Whether or not they begin the ThM program while finishing the MDiv or MTS program, students may take one elective in their MDiv or MTS program that can also count in the ThM program. The elective should be taken at a ThM level (for 3 credits). For this one course, students pay the MDiv/MTS tuition rate per credit hour. Students who choose to take additional courses for the ThM program before completing their MDiv or MTS program need to be admitted into the ThM program first and need to pay the ThM tuition rate per credit hour for these courses.

PhD Credit for Courses Taken in a ThM Program

A student who has taken PhD-level courses at Calvin Seminary as part of a ThM program, and subsequently is admitted to the PhD program, may petition the Doctoral Studies Committee (by way of the Director of Doctoral Studies) to have up to nine hours of those PhD-level courses

applied to his or her PhD program. The Doctoral Studies Committee will make its decision on the basis of its evaluation of whether the work done in each course was at a PhD level.

Program Sequence

The ThM program can be completed in one or two years. Typically, students for whom English is a second language take two years to complete the program.

One-Year Program

| | Fall Semester | J-term | Spring Semester |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| Major Research Paper Option | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Methodology • Two departmental or general electives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One departmental or general elective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two departmental or general electives • Major Research Paper |
| Thesis Option | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Methodology • Two departmental or general electives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One departmental or general elective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One departmental or general elective • Thesis writing and defense** |

**If the thesis is completed during the summer, the student can graduate in December.

Two-Year Program

| | Fall Semester | J-term | Spring Semester |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Year 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Methodology • Written Expression (required for some as part of admission; optional audit for others) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One departmental or general elective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two departmental or general electives |
| Year 2: Major Research Paper Option | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two departmental or general electives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Research Paper Proposal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Research Paper |
| Year 2: Thesis Option | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One departmental or general elective • Thesis proposal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis writing and defense** |

**If the thesis is completed during the summer, the student can graduate in December.

Library Resources

The Hekman Library of Calvin College and Seminary has extensive holdings in theology, philosophy, and history, and houses the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, one of the finest collections of resources for studies in Calvin and the Reformed tradition. The library's 785,000-volume collection of books, government documents, and bound periodicals, as well as 808,000 items of microform, arranged according to the Library of Congress classification, is housed on four floors of open stacks. The library subscribes to approximately 2,300 periodicals

in print format, and makes over 200,000 books and periodicals available electronically. The theological section is located on the fourth floor of the library.

Policy for Loaning Books to ThM Students

The library loans books to ThM students for a six-week loan period, with unlimited renewals (unless a loaned book is requested by another patron). For complete library circulation policies, please visit the library “Circulation” page at http://library.calvin.edu/policies/circ_all

Study Carrels

ThM students may request a dedicated study carrel in Hekman Library. Contact the Theological Librarian to ask for a carrel.

Writing Resources

One goal of the ThM program is helping students to develop skills in solid academic writing. Two helpful resources on the process of academic writing and developing an argument are *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian, and *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*, by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein.¹

In addition, written assignments, papers, and theses must use proper English grammar, style, punctuation, and spelling. Two helpful general guides to English writing are *On Writing Well*, by William Zinsser, and *The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White.²

Sources used in writing the paper must be identified by footnotes or endnotes. If one source is used repeatedly in a paper, you may include an initial footnote with bibliographical information and a comment that subsequent references to the work will be made parenthetically in the body of the text. For papers in theology and ministry, use the online “Turabian Quick Guide” for basic matters and either *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian, or the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for more complex issues.³ With

¹ Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed., revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, William T. FitzGerald, and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2018) and Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*, 4th ed. (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2018).

² William Zinsser, *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*, 30th anniv. ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 2006); William Strunk Jr., *The Elements of Style*, 4th ed., with revisions and additions by E. B. White and foreword by Roger Angell (New York: Longman, 2000).

³ Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed.; *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press,

permission of the supervisor, students with a concentration in Pastoral Care or Educational Ministry may follow the style requirements of the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (currently 6th edition, 2010).⁴ For papers in biblical studies, use the online “Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook Style, Second Edition*” for basic matters and *The SBL Handbook of Style*, by Billie Jean Collins for more complex issues.⁵

ThM students have access to the Calvin Seminary Rhetoric Center. The Rhetoric Center, located in the Student Center area, offers proofreading of completed papers, sermons, and theses to correct errors in spelling, grammar, and related matters. Please note that the Rhetoric Center needs sufficient time to review and return your paper or thesis to you. See the Rhetoric Center’s webpage for more information.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Faithful Christian discipleship calls for academic integrity in all of our writing and speaking. One threat to our academic integrity is plagiarism.

1. Plagiarism is taking the intellectual property of others without proper acknowledgment.
2. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty with severe consequences, including a failing grade for the assignment (and perhaps for an entire course). Plagiarism can also lead to dismissal from Calvin Seminary.
3. Plagiarism harms not only the person whose words were taken inappropriately, but also the person who commits plagiarism and therefore loses the opportunity to develop their own voice and contribute to the theological conversation.
4. Some students unintentionally commit plagiarism because they do not know how to use sources properly. Learn to identify direct quotations, paraphrases, and other uses of sources (using footnotes and other means).
5. If you quote something from a source, or if you summarize something that a source says, or if you get an idea from a source, you should give credit to the source. In the case of quotations, you need quotation marks and a footnote. If you paraphrase or summarize something from a source or get an idea from a source, you need a footnote.
6. See the Calvin Seminary Student Handbook for a description of plagiarism and how to avoid it: <http://semlink.calvinseminary.edu/wp-content/uploads/Student-Handbook-Revision-11-02-2015.pdf>
7. If you need more help understanding plagiarism, see the many websites devoted to

2017). Students have access to the complete Chicago Manual of Style at: <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html> The “Turabian Quick Guide” is online at <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/citation-guide.html>

⁴ *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed. (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010).

⁵ Billie Jean Collins, *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014). The “Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook Style, Second Edition*” is available on the SBL website at <https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/SBLHSupp2015-02.pdf>

explaining it.

Registering a Major Research Paper or Thesis

- Students must download the major research paper or thesis registration and proposal forms (available electronically on the Registrar's Office page on SemLink) and review the proposal with their supervisor.
- If a student wants to work with a supervisor from Calvin College, they must get special permission from the Associate Academic Dean before contacting the professor.

ThM Major Research Paper Process

Proposal

Students should download the major research paper proposal form from the Registrar's Office page on SemLink, find a supervisor for the project, and obtain the supervisor's approval and signature.

Registration

After obtaining the supervisor's signature on the "ThM Major Research Paper Registration Form," submit the form to the ThM Program Adviser and Registrar along with the "ThM Major Research Paper Proposal" in order to register your major research paper. The major research paper must be registered no later than January 20 if you intend to write the paper during the spring and graduate in May, or by August 15 if you intend to write the paper during the fall and graduate in December.

Writing the Paper

Use the skills learned in Research Methodology as you write your major research paper. Be in contact with your supervisor throughout the writing process, submitting drafts as agreed to by you and the supervisor.

Format Requirements

The seminary expects major research papers to be approximately 30 pages, not including the bibliography.

Follow the guidelines in the "Style" section under the "ThM Thesis Format Requirements."

Deadlines

Major research papers are due in the semester in which they are registered. If the paper is not completed by the end of the semester in which it is registered, you must obtain a contract for incomplete work, which allows up to one additional month (30 days) to complete the paper. If the paper is not completed by the end of the 30 days, it will be graded as is.

ThM Thesis Process

Proposal

Use the "ThM Thesis Registration Form" to submit your proposal to your ThM thesis supervisor for approval and signature.

Registration

After obtaining the supervisor's signature on the "ThM Thesis Registration Form," submit the form to the ThM Program Adviser and Registrar along with the "ThM Thesis Proposal" in order to register your thesis. Both forms are located in this handbook. The thesis must be registered no later than January 20 if you intend to graduate in May or by August 15 if you intend to graduate in December.

Writing the Thesis

Use the skills learned in Research Methodology as you write your thesis. Be in contact with your supervisor throughout the writing process, submitting drafts as agreed to by you and the supervisor.

When you have your first chapter complete and have an initial formatted bibliography, submit what you have to the Theological Librarian, who will provide comments on formatting. Doing this will save you time later.

Deadlines

Students have two semesters to complete a thesis. If a thesis is registered in the fall semester, a defense-ready copy is due by April 20 of the following spring (and graduation will occur in May). If a thesis is registered in the spring semester, a defense-ready copy is due by November 10 of the following fall (and graduation will occur in December). These deadlines allow time for defending the thesis and making any subsequent corrections. If you do not submit a defense-ready thesis by April 20 (for May graduation) or November 10 (for December graduation), graduation will be postponed until the next semester.

If the thesis is not submitted by the due date, you must obtain a contract for incomplete work, which allows up to one additional month (30 days) to complete the thesis. If the paper is not completed by the end of the 30 days, it will be graded as is. Since ThM theses are graded on a credit/no credit basis, the grade will be "no credit," and you will need to register and pay for the thesis again.

Thesis Defense

By the time the defense-ready copy is submitted the supervisor selects a second reader in consultation with the student and the ThM Program Adviser. The reader must receive the defense-ready thesis at least two weeks before the defense.

The ThM thesis defense is attended by the supervisor, second reader, and the student. Defenses ordinarily follow this format:

1. The thesis supervisor opens the defense with prayer.
2. The thesis supervisor invites the student to address the following issues (10 minutes).
 - (1) Why did you pick this topic for your thesis?
 - (2) What did you learn from your work on this thesis?
 - (3) What contribution does this thesis make to the field? Students should not read their responses to these questions from a prepared text or notes.

3. The supervisor and second reader ask questions of the student for 15-20 minutes each, dismiss the student from the room, render a judgment about what might yet need to be revised, and call the student back in and discuss any required and recommended revisions.
4. The thesis is graded credit/no credit.

ThM Thesis Format Requirements

Length

The seminary considers an appropriate thesis to be approximately 100 pages, not including the bibliography.

Style

As a general rule, the thesis must conform to the format and bibliographic style requirements in the most recent edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian (currently 9th edition, 2018). With permission of the supervisor, students with a concentration in Pastoral Care or Educational Ministry may follow the style requirements of the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (currently 6th edition, 2010).

Theses in biblical studies (Old Testament or New Testament) must follow the guidelines in *The SBL Handbook of Style*, by Billie Jean Collins (currently 2nd edition, 2014). A handy short version of the SBL Handbook is available at the SBL website (www.sbl-site.org) by searching for “Student Supplement for *The SBL Handbook Style*, Second Edition.” For questions not answered in this handbook, follow the guidelines in Turabian.

In order to be sure that footnotes and bibliography conform to proper style, students should submit to the Theological Librarian a copy of the first substantial chapter they write along with the bibliography as it stands at that time. This will allow the Theological Librarian to give input and advice at an early stage in the writing of the thesis. Students who fail to take advantage of this opportunity may need extra time to put the final copy of the thesis into proper format. In particular, the following format is required:

1. **Typeface:** The same style of type should be used throughout the work. For all papers, and especially theses, Times New Roman, 12 point, regular type must be used, with line spacing set at 2.0. Footnotes may be in 10 or 11 point, and must be single-spaced (except for doublespacing between footnotes). Kerning is acceptable but tracking is not. Either italics or underlining should be used in the work; no paper should include both underlining and italics. Boldface type may be used for chapter titles or part titles and for section headings, but not within the text.
2. **Paper size:** The standard page dimensions are 8 ½ by 11 inches.
3. **Margins:** Margins must be at least one inch on all sides. For theses, the left margin must be 1½ inches in order to allow for binding. All material (including page numbers) must be within these margins. In general, right margins should be left ragged (not justified). Right margins may be aligned (justified) only if that does not leave large gaps between words.

4. Indention: Paragraph indention must be consistent. Block quotations of prose should be indented the same distance from the left margin of text, and new paragraphs within them should have an additional indention.
5. Spacing: The entire work must be double-spaced except chapter headings, long quotations (single-spaced), and footnotes (single-spaced if more than one line in length; double-spacing between footnotes).
6. Pagination: For theses and major research papers, every page of the work, including blank pages, must be assigned a page number, although the page number does not appear on pages that precede the table of contents. Pagination that appears on front matter must be lowercase Roman numerals, appearing in the bottom center of the page. The first page of text is page one. In the text and back matter, page numbers should appear as Arabic numerals, either centered or flush right above the text (except for pages with chapter headings). If the page number is included on pages with chapter headings, it should appear centered below the text.
7. Quotations
 - a. Direct quotations of prose should be incorporated into the text of the paper and enclosed in double quotation marks. A direct quotation that runs to five or more lines of text should be set off as a single-spaced indented block, with no quotation marks preceding or following it.
 - b. Periods and commas are placed inside quotation marks. Question marks, dashes, and exclamation points that are not part of the original quotation are placed outside the quotation marks. Semicolons and colons are placed outside quotation marks.
 - c. Any omission from a quotation must be indicated by ellipsis points. An omission within a sentence is indicated by three dots. Punctuation that occurs immediately before or after the omitted material should appear just before or after the ellipsis points. A brief quoted phrase or obviously incomplete sentence should not have ellipsis marks at its beginning or end because it is clear that it is an incomplete fragment. A block quotation should not have ellipsis points at the beginning and should have ellipsis points at the end only if the quotation does not end with a complete sentence.
 - d. If anything is added to a quotation, such as corrected spelling or a name or term that clarifies the quotation, it must be enclosed in square brackets.
 - e. If italics or underlining is added to part of a quotation for emphasis, the addition must be indicated by a comment such as “italics added” or “emphasis added” in a footnote, in parentheses after the quotation, or in square brackets immediately after the emphasized words.
8. Notes: Notes must appear as footnotes, not as endnotes. Do not use the parenthetical reference method of citation.

Required Sequence of Items in a Thesis (required items are in bold)

Front Matter

1. **Title page:** The title page should conform to the approved format (see Appendix E). Although the title page is page i, the number does not appear on it. All of the items on the title page except the title must be in twelve-point type. The title should be in fourteen-point type.
2. Copyright page (optional, but recommended): Calvin Seminary recommends that students protect their work by claiming the copyright, even if they do not register this with the copyright office. Although this is page ii, the number does not appear on it. Students should use the following format:

Copyright © 2018 by John Calvin

All rights reserved

3. Dedication (optional): A dedication, if included, should be brief: “To John.” In order to avoid clutter at the beginning of the thesis, it is often advisable to include any dedication in the preface or acknowledgments. Although this page counts in the page numbering, the number does not appear on it.
4. Epigraph (optional): An epigraph, if placed in the front matter, is a quotation adumbrating the theme of the work. An epigraph should be used only if the quotation is particularly appropriate to the work. Although this page counts in the page numbering, the number does not appear on it.
5. **Table of Contents:** Usually titled CONTENTS (in full capitals), the table of contents lists each part of the thesis except the title page, copyright page or blank page, dedication, and epigraph, which precede it. The table of contents must identify all parts, chapters, and sections with exactly the same wording and capitalization as in the body of the paper. The beginning page number for each chapter or section should be identified. Beginning with the first page of the table of contents, each subsequent page of the front matter should be numbered, in the bottom center, using lowercase Roman numerals.
6. Preface or Acknowledgments (optional): The preface explains the motivation or context for the study. It may also include acknowledgments. The preface should be no longer than two pages. If the author wishes only to acknowledge various sorts of assistance received, this item should be titled ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.
7. Abbreviations (optional): If the author has devised a system of abbreviations of commonly used terms or works, abbreviations should be identified. Arrange the list alphabetically by the abbreviation, not by the full term or title.
8. **Abstract:** The abstract must be provided by the student and approved by the thesis committee. An abstract of a ThM thesis may be no longer than 200 words. The abstract must be included in both the defense copy and the final copy. The abstract should summarize the problem addressed as well as the thesis and contents of the paper. It should be written with the goal of providing concise, clear information that will help another scholar decide whether this work will be useful in his or her research.

Main Text

1. **Introduction:** The introduction is often called chapter 1. If the introduction is brief, it may be identified simply as INTRODUCTION, with the subsequent material identified as chapter 1. The first page of the introduction is page 1 of the paper. The pagination of the main text and back matter should proceed from this point, using Arabic numerals. If the page number is listed on the first page of the introduction and subsequent chapters, it should appear at the bottom of the page.
2. **Parts (optional):** The work may be divided into parts, each comprising one or more chapters. If the work is divided into parts, the introduction should precede the first part. Although part-title pages count in page numbering, the page number does not appear on the page.
3. **Chapters:** The body of the paper is divided into chapters, which may be divided into sections and subsections.
4. **Conclusion (optional):** The last chapter may be identified as a conclusion, and may appear with or without a chapter number. If the final part of the text is very brief, it may be identified as an epilogue or afterword.

Back Matter

1. **Appendix(es) (optional):** An appendix may be useful for making available material that is relevant to the text, but not suitable for inclusion in it. If there are two or more appendixes, they should be numbered or designated by letters (Appendix 1, Appendix 2, etc., or Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.).
2. **Bibliography or List of Works Cited:** The bibliography may be a single list, arranged alphabetically by author, or it may be divided into sections, either by subject or by category (e.g., primary and secondary works).

Submitting Final Copies of the Thesis

1. A final copy of the thesis must be submitted to the supervisor of the thesis and the Theological Librarian, who will do a final review. When the thesis has been reviewed and approved, the Theological Librarian will contact the student, who then submits to the Theological Librarian an electronic version of the thesis for digital preservation and four unbound paper copies of the thesis for binding (two copies for the library, one for the thesis supervisor, and one for the student).
2. The student also signs a Non-Exclusive Distribution License that grants to Calvin Theological Seminary the non-exclusive right to reproduce and distribute the student's thesis to the public through appropriate means, including as a pdf file on the library website. This right goes into effect either immediately or after three years, if by then the student has not notified CTS of any publisher-required embargo.
3. Once the student has submitted the final electronic and paper copies of the thesis to the Theological Librarian, the Librarian informs the Registrar, who then posts the student's degree to their transcript, assuming all financial obligations have been met.
4. A student who wishes to register a claim of U.S. copyright for the thesis should consult the website of the United States Copyright Office (especially the sections "Copyright Basics" and "Frequently Asked Questions").

5. If the final copies of the thesis are not submitted in proper form by the August 15 after the student graduates (or any subsequent year), the student will be charged the annual continuation fee for the next academic year.
6. If the final copies of the thesis are not submitted in proper form by the end of December in the case of those graduating in May or by the end of July in the case of those graduating in December, the date on the title page of the thesis shall be the month and year that the final copies are submitted rather than the month and year in which the student was approved for graduation.

Policies that Apply to All Students

ThM students must abide by all policies that apply to all students at Calvin Theological Seminary, including the Academic Catalog, Student Handbook, Student Conduct Code, and Safe and Healthy Community policy, which are found on the Calvin Seminary Semlink website.

Exit Interview

ThM students will be invited to participate in an exit interview during their last semester in the program. Students are strongly encouraged to participate, since exit interviews provide important information for improving the ThM program.

Disclaimer

Calvin Theological Seminary reserves the right to change or correct any material in this handbook. This handbook is not a contract or an offer of a contract.

Appendix A: ThM Major Research Paper Registration Form

Calvin Theological Seminary
ThM Major Research Paper Registration Form
(Course number 899T)

This form is for *the major research paper course required at the end of the ThM program* (non-thesis route). This form must be submitted for registration by the publicized deadline date for the semester in which it is registered. The paper is due at the end of the semester in which it is registered.

Name of student: _____ Term registered: _____

Title (maximum 45 characters; to appear on your transcript): _____

Supervising professor _____

Student's signature _____ Date: _____

Supervising professor's signature _____ Date: _____

Submit this form to the ThM Program Adviser & Registrar by January 20 if you intend to graduate in May or by August 15 if you intend to graduate in December.

Date of submission to the ThM Program Adviser: _____

Attach the completed "ThM Major Research Paper Proposal" to this form.

Appendix B: Format for ThM Major Research Paper Proposal

THM MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

TITLE (of the proposed paper; maximum 45 characters, including spaces)

Student's Name

Date (Month and Year)

Include the following elements:

I. Question

What is the main question you will be addressing in your paper?

II. The Present State of the Question

Provide a brief survey of the pertinent literature in the area and state why it does answer the question you have identified.

III. Tentative Thesis and Outline

A. State briefly, in the form of a thesis statement, what your paper proposes to demonstrate.

B. Give an outline of the paper, by sections, with a short statement about how each section will contribute to developing and defending the major thesis of your study.

IV. Preliminary Bibliography

Provide a select bibliography of primary and secondary sources to be used in your paper. This bibliography should reflect the latest scholarship.

The proposal should be approximately 1-2 double-spaced pages (not including preliminary bibliography), with footnotes in the correct format (Turabian/SBL Handbook).

Appendix C: ThM Thesis Registration Form

Calvin Theological Seminary
ThM Thesis Proposal and Registration Form
(Course number 898T)

Submit this form to the ThM Program Adviser & Registrar by January 20 if you intend to graduate in May or by April 15 if you intend to graduate in December.

In order to have time to defend the thesis and make corrections before the end of the semester, the thesis is due to your supervisor by April 20 in order to graduate in May and by November 15 in order to graduate in December.

Name of student: _____ Term registered: _____

Thesis title (maximum 45 characters; to appear on your transcript): _____

Supervising professor _____

Second reader (to be determined by the supervising professor) _____

Student's signature _____ Date: _____

Supervising professor's signature _____ Date: _____

Date of submission to the ThM Program Adviser: _____

Attach the completed "ThM Thesis Proposal" to this form.

Appendix D: Format for ThM Thesis Proposal

THM THESIS PROPOSAL

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

TITLE (of the proposed thesis; maximum 45 characters, including spaces)

Student's Name

Date (month and year)

Include the following elements:

I. Question

What is the main question you will be addressing in your thesis?

II. The Present State of the Question

Provide a brief survey of the pertinent literature in the area and state why it does not answer the question you have identified.

III. Tentative Thesis and Outline

A. State briefly, in the form of a thesis statement, what your thesis proposes to demonstrate.

B. Give an outline of the thesis, by sections, with a short statement about how each section will contribute to developing and defending the major thesis of your study.

IV. Preliminary Bibliography

Provide a select bibliography of primary and secondary sources to be used in your thesis. This bibliography should reflect the latest scholarship.

The thesis proposal should be approximately 2-3 double-spaced pages (plus a preliminary bibliography), with footnotes in the correct format (Turabian/SBL Handbook).

Appendix E: Sample Thesis Title Page

Note: fill in concentration and graduation month and year.

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A STUDY IN REFORMED THEOLOGY

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF THEOLOGY
IN CONCENTRATION

BY
JOHN CALVIN

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
GRADUATION MONTH YEAR

Appendix F: Non-Exclusive Distribution License

**CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
THM THESIS NON-EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTION LICENSE**

By signing and submitting this license “the author” grants to Calvin Theological Seminary the nonexclusive right to reproduce and distribute your ThM thesis in electronic format via the World Wide Web, as well as the right to migrate or convert your thesis, without alteration of the content, for the purpose of preservation and/or continued distribution.

Calvin Theological Seminary acknowledges that this is a non-exclusive license; any copyrights in the submission remain with the author or other copyright holder and subsequent uses of the submitted material by that person(s) are not restricted by this license.

The author agrees that Calvin Theological Seminary may keep more than one copy of this ThM thesis for purposes of security, backup and preservation.

The author represents that the thesis covered by this license is his/her original work and that he/she has the right to grant this license to Calvin Theological Seminary. The author further represents that the thesis does not, to the best of his/her knowledge, infringe upon any third-party’s copyright.

If this thesis is based upon work that has been sponsored or supported by any agency or organization other than Calvin Theological Seminary, the author represents that he/she has fulfilled any right of review or other obligation required by contract or agreement with the supporting entity.

Calvin Theological Seminary and/or its library will make the thesis available to the public accompanied by a copyright statement indicating the author’s continuing rights. Calvin Theological Seminary will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the author’s name remains clearly associated with the thesis and that no alterations of the content are made.

ThM Thesis Title: _____

Author: _____

Please check one of the following and sign below:

___ I permit Calvin Theological Seminary to make the electronic full text of my thesis available immediately.

___ I request that Calvin Theological Seminary embargo (restrict) access to the electronic full text of my thesis for three years. If, before the end of three years, I have an arrangement with a publisher that requires an embargo on access to the electronic full text of my thesis, I will notify Calvin Theological Seminary that I desire to embargo (restrict) all such access for as long as legally possible. If, at the end of three years, I do not notify Calvin Theological Seminary that I have such an arrangement with a publisher, Calvin Theological Seminary will automatically have my permission to make the electronic full text of my ThM thesis available at that time.

I agree to the terms of this ThM Thesis Non-exclusive Distribution License:

_____ (signature) _____ (date)

Appendix G: Top Ten Formatting Issues with Theses and Dissertations

1. **Margins:** In order to bind the thesis properly, the left-hand margin on all pages should be 1.5 inches. Top, bottom, and right-hand margins should be 1 inch.
2. **Order of Front and Back Matter:** Please follow Turabian (9th ed., 2018), “Appendix” closely. Note that the latest editions differ from previous editions on this matter, so be sure to use the 9th edition.
3. **Table of Contents headings and page numbers** must match that of the body of the text. If you alter your text it may be necessary to adjust your TOC accordingly. This should be one of the final things you check before submitting the final copy of your thesis.
4. **Capitalization:** Refer to Turabian, chapter 22, but also:
Calvin Theological Journal style sheet in back of each issue of journal.
SBL Handbook of Style, 2nd ed., 4.3.6
Chicago Manual of Style (17th ed.), chapter 7 for many examples.

The above sources frequently do not agree with each other, so sometimes you must use your own judgment after consulting them. The important thing: BE CONSISTENT throughout your work.
5. **Position of page numbers in body of text:** The body of text begins with Arabic numeral 1. In the body of text, pages that bear titles (e.g., the first page in each chapter) should have an Arabic numeral centered at the bottom of the page. The other pages, including appendices and bibliography, should have Arabic numerals centered at the top of the page (or placed in the upper right hand corner).
6. **Footnote Numbering:** Footnote numbering begins anew with each chapter.
7. **Capitalization of Foreign Language Titles** in footnote and bibliographic references: For guidance on this, see *Chicago Manual of Style* (17th ed.), 14.193.
8. **Footnote and bibliographic citations of journal articles.** Be sure to look closely at Turabian for citation of works in “Notes-Bibliography Style” (chapter 16). Take special note, for example, of the format for citation of an essay within a book of essays. This seems to be one of the most difficult formats to follow. You can save yourself plenty of time if you begin to do this correctly from the start of your program.
9. **Documenting Electronic Resources:** See Turabian, 15.4. The 17th edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* contains more complete rules about citing such sources. See 15.4, which refers the reader to more specific details regarding electronic books, journals and informally published electronic material.
10. **Use of Foreign-Language Resources:** Be sure to look at chapter 10 of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (17th ed.) if you are using foreign-language resources, especially

languages that do not use the Roman or Latin alphabet (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Arabic, etc.) It will be necessary to make decisions about whether and how to translate or transliterate titles. Consult with the Theological Librarian before you get too far with your bibliography.

11. **Bibliography:** These resources are especially helpful:

- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2018).
- *Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

For theses (and papers) in biblical theology, please follow Turabian for the thesis format (pagination, order of front matter, etc.), but for footnote and bibliography format follow:

- *SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014) Theo Ref PN 147 .S26 2014
- Student Supplement to *The SBL Handbook of Style*. Ed. Joel M. LeMon, comp. by Melanie Greer Nogalski, et al. (A 17-page digital supplement with guidelines focused especially on term papers and some items not covered by the above *SBL Handbook of Style*.) <http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/SBLHSupp2015-02.pdf>

Helpful Advice: If you are writing a thesis, when you have your first chapter complete and have pulled together the beginnings of a formatted bibliography, submit it to the Theological Librarian. This will save you much time later.

When you have completed your thesis and defended it, please submit a paper copy to the Theological Librarian, who will check it for proper formatting and approve it for printing and binding. (Note that, if you have not consulted with the Theological Librarian earlier, getting this approval may involve a significant amount of work for you.)

After the formatting of your thesis has been approved by the Theological Librarian, you should submit 4 printed copies to the Theological Librarian for binding. You should also fill out a permission for the library to distribute your thesis digitally on its website. The library will put two bound copies in its collection. One bound copy will go to your thesis supervisor. One copy will be returned to you.

Appendix H: Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I apply for admission to the ThM program?

You should submit your application online. If you have questions, please contact the Calvin Theological Seminary [Admissions Office](#).

2. Does Calvin Seminary offer scholarships or financial aid to ThM students?

Yes, Calvin Seminary has a limited amount of financial aid for students in the ThM program. Students are encouraged to explore various options of financial support for studying in the program. Students must apply for financial aid by March 1 for admission for the fall semester and by November 15 for admission for the spring semester.

3. Are any modern foreign languages required for admission to the ThM program?

No.

4. Are there any biblical language requirements for a ThM program in Old Testament or New Testament?

Applicants with a concentration in Old Testament must have a minimum of two language courses in Hebrew. In addition they should have at least one language course in Greek. Applicants are required to take a proficiency test in Hebrew as part of the admission process.

Applicants with a concentration in New Testament must have a minimum of two language courses in Greek. In addition, they should have at least one language course in Hebrew. Applicants are required to take a proficiency test in Greek as part of the admission process.

Applicants with a concentration in an area other than biblical studies must have at least two courses in the biblical languages; either two courses in one of the languages or one course in each language.

Because the ThM programs in OT and NT require competency in the corresponding biblical language, applicants to these programs take a proficiency test in Hebrew (OT) or Greek (NT). If a student's performance on this test indicates the need for greater competency, the student will be asked to take an additional course in that language at Calvin Seminary

5. May I retake a Greek or Hebrew proficiency test?

ThM students who do not pass a Hebrew or Greek proficiency test may retake the test a maximum of one additional time at least two months after the first test. There is no charge for taking the first test in a language; there is a charge of \$100 for retaking a test in a language.

6. Can I transfer academic credit from other institutions into the ThM program?

A maximum of three credit hours of ThM-level course work at an accredited school may be transferred in as an elective upon approval of the ThM Program Adviser.

7. When can I begin the course work for the ThM program?

Students may begin studies in either the fall or spring semester.

8. How long does it take to complete the ThM program?

The ThM program can be completed in one year. Students for whom English is a second language may complete it in one year, but they are advised to do it in two years, especially if they intend to apply to PhD programs. International students with F-1 or J-1 status may spread their course work over two years and still maintain full-time status.

9. What is considered full-time status in the ThM program?

ThM students must take at least 3 credit hours per semester in order to be considered full-time.

10. How do I register for courses?

All registration is done online. Beginning students can expect information and instructions from the Registrar's Office in the months before they start their studies. They will also meet with the ThM Program Adviser during orientation in order to discuss their course plan.

11. May I take courses or write a major research paper or thesis with a professor from Calvin College?

You may, under certain circumstances. If you are interested, speak to the ThM Program Adviser for further information.

12. What are the requirements for the specialization in Ancient Near Eastern Languages and Literature?

The program requires 21 credit hours of academic work, including a 3-credit research methodology course and 3 electives (9 credits) in Ancient Near Eastern Languages and Literature, two of which must be Ancient Near Eastern languages (Akkadian, Aramaic, Ugaritic). Students are encouraged to take four electives in the area of ANE Languages and Literature when possible.

Students who wish to complete the program in one year should take all the courses that are available in Ancient Near Eastern Languages and Literature that year. They may need to take one course as a tutorial.

13. What are the requirements for the specialization in Pastoral Care?

The program requires 21 credit hours of academic work: a 3-credit research methodology course; 6 credit hours of Clinical Pastoral Education; 9 credit hours of course work in Pastoral Care; and a 3-credit major research paper.

14. May I apply for a second ThM program at Calvin Seminary?

Yes, you may. If you do a second ThM program, one course may count as part of both programs.

15. May I begin the ThM program while finishing the requirements for the MDiv or MTS at Calvin Seminary?

Yes, students in the MDiv or MTS program at Calvin Seminary may begin the ThM program while finishing requirements for the MDiv or MTS program. Ordinarily, students do not begin the ThM program before the last year of their MDiv or MTS program.

16. May I get credit in my ThM program for any coursework from my MDiv or MTS program?

Yes, whether or not they begin the ThM program while finishing the MDiv or MTS program, students may take one elective in their MDiv or MTS program that can also count in the ThM program. The elective should be taken at a ThM level (for 3 credits). For this one course, students pay the MDiv/MTS tuition rate per credit hour. Students who choose to take additional courses for the ThM program before completing their MDiv or MTS program need to be admitted into the ThM program first and need to pay the ThM tuition rate per credit hour for these courses.

17. If I get a ThM from Calvin Seminary and then begin the PhD program at Calvin Seminary, may I get any credit in my PhD program for courses I took in my ThM program?

Yes, a student who has taken PhD-level courses at Calvin Seminary as part of a ThM program, and subsequently is admitted to the PhD program, may petition the Doctoral Studies Committee (by way of the Director of Doctoral Studies) to have up to nine hours of those PhD-level courses applied to his or her PhD program. The Doctoral Studies Committee will make its decision on the basis of its evaluation of whether the work done in each course was at a PhD level.

18. Is there good advice as I prepare to apply for a PhD program?

- Ask faculty members for suggestions about where to apply for PhD study.
- Do not spend so much time preparing for the GRE or completing applications that you do less than your best work in your ThM program.
- If you can, visit programs you are very interested in attending.
- Apply to a number of PhD programs. Do not set your heart on one program before you have been admitted.

19. Which doctoral programs have accepted ThM graduates from Calvin Seminary?

ThM graduates from Calvin Seminary have been accepted into doctoral programs at many schools and in a variety of specializations. Recent graduates have entered doctoral programs at the following schools:

- Boston University
- Brite Divinity School
- Calvin Theological Seminary
- Claremont Graduate University
- Concordia Theological Seminary
- Dallas Theological Seminary
- Duke Divinity School
- Evangelical Theological Institute of Louvain
- Free University of Amsterdam
- Fuller Theological Seminary
- Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
- McMaster University
- Princeton Theological Seminary
- Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Toronto School of Theology
- Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
- University of Leiden
- University of Wisconsin
- Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia)
- Wheaton Graduate School