

Antiochian House of Studies (AHOS)  
**Master's Thesis**  
 Instructions for Faculty and Students

For the degrees of Master of Theological Studies, Master of Divinity,  
 and Master of Pastoral Care and Counseling

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR A MASTER'S THESIS  
 (Please see the body of the "Instructions" for detailed guidance)

SEMESTER:	STUDENT ACTIONS / DATES:	SUPERVISOR ACTIONS / DATES:
<b>UNIT 4:</b> <b>SPRING</b> <b>OF SECOND</b> <b>YEAR</b>  <u><b>THESIS</b></u> <u><b>DEVELOPMENT</b></u>	<p><i>Students identify a subject area and solicit the support of a suitably qualified potential Supervisor and Second Reader.</i></p> <p><b>Prior to August 15</b>, students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Obtain agreement from potential Supervisor and Second Reader;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify subject area for thesis; in consultation with supervisor, begin drafting thesis proposal and compiling bibliography</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Along with Supervisor, submit "Supervisor and Second Reader" form to the Director for Master's Theses.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Submit (along with Supervisor) any request to write a thesis in a language other than English submit to President of AHOS.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Potential Supervisors and/or Second Readers who are not pre-approved must apply for approval to the Director for Master's Theses.</i></p> <p><b>Prior to August 15</b>, where necessary, potential Supervisors and/or Second Readers are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Submit necessary documentation, including curriculum vitae, to the Director for Master's Theses in order to be approved;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin advising student on feasibility of a topic and suitability of the project within the subject area; provide guidance on readings and source material for bibliography; review drafts of thesis proposal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Submit the "Supervisor and Second Reader" form to the Director for Master's Theses.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Submit (along with student) any request to write a thesis in a language other than English to AHOS President.</li> </ul>
<b>UNIT 5: FINAL</b> <b>SEMESTER</b> <b>OF COURSE</b> <b>WORK</b> <u><b>THESIS</b></u> <u><b>APPROVAL</b></u>	<p><i>In close consultation with their approved Supervisor, students finalize and submit their thesis proposal. Upon approval of the Thesis Proposal, the student begins research and writing.</i></p>	<p><i>Supervisor reviews final draft(s) of formal thesis proposal and communicates with student regarding the planned schedule for writing, meetings, etc.</i></p>

*Continued:*  
**UNIT 5: FINAL  
 SEMESTER  
 OF COURSE  
 WORK  
 THESIS  
 APPROVAL**

**Prior to October 31**, with the concurrence of the Supervisor, students are expected to:

- ☐ Submit completed Thesis Proposal to the Director for Master's Theses for Faculty Council approval in Nov/Dec;

[Students will be notified by December regarding Thesis Proposal approval.]

- ☐ Alternatively, make an earlier submission of Thesis Proposal for possible "exceptional approval" by the Director for Master's Theses.

**Prior to October 31**, working closely with the student, Supervisors are expected to:

- ☐ Discuss and review draft(s) of student's Thesis Proposal prior to student submitting the Proposal for approval.

**UNIT 6:  
 THESIS  
 SEMESTER**  
**THESIS  
 RESEARCH,  
 WRITING  
 AND  
 SUBMISSION**

Student completes research and writing of the thesis. Upon completion, student submits thesis and a separate abstract to the Library and the Antiochian House of Studies.

**By June 1\***, students are expected to:

- ☐ Complete and submit the thesis (which includes the separate abstract);
- ☐ Have a copy of the thesis printed, bound and mailed to the Library;
- ☐ Submit a PDF of the thesis and abstract to the Dean, President, Director for Master's Theses, and Librarian.

Supervisor and Second Reader review and approve thesis (which includes the separate abstract). Supervisor assesses thesis for rating and completes "Certification" form.

**By June 1\***, Supervisors are expected to:

- ☐ Complete and submit the "Certification of Completion Form" to the Director for Master's Theses.

*No Master's thesis may be accepted as complete outside of these "Instructions."*

**\*Thesis Extension beyond June 1**

For an extension to complete the thesis beyond the June 1 deadline, the student must obtain the Supervisor's approval, and complete and submit a "Thesis Extension Approval" form (Attachment 4) to the Director for Master's Theses. Students who submit a "Thesis Extension Approval" form and complete their thesis by September 1 of that same year (after the June 1 deadline, but on or before September 1) shall graduate the next year and shall not be required to pay a thesis extension fee. Students who require more time (beyond September 1 after their initial thesis-writing semester), shall be billed a thesis extension fee of \$500 per year.

## Statement of Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all AHOS students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; using information from the internet with no reference of the source, improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. The Antiochian House of Studies takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity and to penalize academic dishonesty.

## Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools

Students who plan to use generative Artificial Intelligence tools in researching or writing their thesis must always seek and document in writing unambiguous approval for the planned uses in advance from their supervisor.

## Identifying a Supervisor and Second Reader

The student is advised to begin identifying a subject area and soliciting the support of a suitably qualified member of the faculty as a potential Supervisor no later than the end of the second academic year of their respective Master's program (namely, upon successful completion of Unit IV), whether for degrees of the Master of Theological Studies, Master of Divinity, or Master of Pastoral Care and Counseling.

All members of the AHOS faculty *who hold an earned doctorate* are pre-approved to be Supervisors for Master's theses. All members of the AHOS faculty are pre-approved to be Second Readers for Master's theses.

The Director for Master's Theses may approve a Supervisor and a Second Reader outside of the faculty. However, in order to be approved, any such Supervisor must be an Orthodox Christian in good canonical standing, hold an earned doctorate from an accredited institution, and hold an Orthodox theological degree or demonstrate Orthodox theological formation through their curriculum vitae.

In exceptional cases, a Supervisor within or outside the AHOS faculty may not hold an earned doctorate but demonstrate sufficient academic training and expertise in a subject area through their curriculum vitae in order to be approved.

A Second Reader outside the faculty must be an Orthodox Christian in good canonical standing and hold an Orthodox theological degree or demonstrate Orthodox theological formation and sufficient academic training and expertise through their curriculum vitae in order to be approved.

The submission for any approval of Supervisors and Second Readers shall take place through email correspondence. The names and signatures of the approved Supervisor, Second Reader, and student, as well as the identification of the subject area for the thesis shall be recorded on the "Supervisor and Second Reader" form (Attachment 1) and submitted by the Supervisor to the Director for Master's Theses. On the form, the Director shall certify that the Supervisor and Second Reader are approved.

## Formulating a Thesis Topic and Obtaining Approval

Although the informal process of identifying a thesis topic and Supervisor can begin much earlier, the formal period allotted to thesis writing is the Spring semester (Unit VI) of the third academic year. However, once an approved individual has agreed to act as a Supervisor in a specified area of research, the formal process begins.

The formal process involves the formulation of a Thesis Proposal in close consultation with one's proposed Supervisor. The Supervisor shall advise the student on the feasibility of a topic within the subject area and the suitability of the project. A written proposal would then be submitted to the Director for Master's Theses to be presented to the Faculty Council for approval no later than the last Faculty Meeting of the fifth semester (that is by November/December of that year).

In order to facilitate research and for approval earlier than the Faculty Council meeting, when requested by the Supervisor and student, the Director of the Master's Thesis Program may grant exceptional approval of thesis proposals and shall inform the Dean and President with a copy of the approved proposal.

This "exceptional approval" is granted after an evaluation of the thesis proposal and other pertinent factors support an assessment that the candidate will successfully complete the work. After such exceptional approval is granted, the Thesis Proposal shall be placed as an informational item on the next faculty agenda to keep all informed.

## Structure of Thesis Proposals

The Antiochian House of Studies requires that all thesis proposals conform to the norms of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, current edition) and its interpretation in Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, current edition) (hereafter, Turabian). All thesis topic proposals must use notes-bibliography style. In addition, *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Atlanta: SBL Press, current edition) may be used as a supplement for biblical studies and related disciplines. The Thesis Proposal shall consist of four parts: working title, purpose, method, and working bibliography of basic primary and most important secondary sources.

### *Title*

The title is considered initial, working, and subject to change during the course of research with the approval of the Supervisor. The Supervisor and student must notify the Director for Master's Theses of any such change.

### *Purpose*

Depending on the topic, the purpose section may contain a clear statement of a problem, research questions to be explored, a point of view that will be supported and argued, hypotheses that will be tested, and/or what will be accomplished. Optionally, this section can also discuss how the theological work in the thesis can be applied to the life of the Church.

### *Method*

The method section must indicate the nature of the data, information, or themes to be discussed; the kinds of interpretive procedures to be employed; and the types of supporting evidence and arguments for the question investigated. A plan of scholarship that outlines the organization of the research must be included. This may

be descriptive or even take the form of a brief outline of the proposed chapters. The methodology section must also reflect the academic tools that will be applied to complete the thesis successfully (for example, language skills, research tools, and so forth) and the scope of the research.

### *Bibliography*

The bibliography of primary and secondary sources must include works upon which the proposal was based. Like the title, the bibliography is initial and working, and subject to change during the course of research with the approval of the Supervisor. It is not necessary to report such changes to the Director for Master's Theses. The bibliographic format must be consistent with Turabian.

### **Thesis Supervision**

It is the responsibility of the Supervisor and student to meet for thesis supervision, once approval of the thesis proposal has been granted. There are no fixed rules regarding the frequency of such meetings and timetables, other than the completion date. Such plans and/or schedules shall be subject to the approval of the Supervisor. The Supervisor shall determine when the thesis is complete and what must be done to satisfactorily fulfill the academic standards of The Antiochian House of Studies.

### **Second Reader**

The thesis must be reviewed by a Second Reader, who will assist the Supervisor to ensure that satisfactory academic standards are maintained and make useful suggestions. This review is usually not meant to be an in-depth consideration of the content but is intended oftentimes to address questions of format and style.

### **Schedule, Requirements, and Preparation of the Manuscript**

The final draft should be completed and submitted no later than June 1 during the Spring semester (Unit VI) of the third academic year. An extension may be granted until September 1 of that year. However, any student who does not complete the thesis and submit the required documentation by the June 1 deadline, as outlined in this Guide, shall not be considered for graduation that year. The student must obtain approval of an extension from the Supervisor by following the procedures listed under the section below, "Completion of Thesis and Criteria for Assessment."

The thesis must be at least 40 pages in length, including footnotes and bibliography. The title page must follow the prescribed form (Attachment 2). A table of contents is not necessary. All sources must be correctly acknowledged. The Antiochian House of Studies requires that all Master's theses conform to the norms of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, current edition) and its interpretation in Turabian. All thesis topic proposals must use notes-bibliography style. In addition, *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Atlanta: SBL Press, current edition) may be used as a supplement for biblical studies and related disciplines.

A dedication, epigraph, list of illustrations, list of tables, list of abbreviations, forward, preface, and acknowledgements may be included, but are not counted for the 40-page requirement.

In the body of the text, footnotes must be used and if exceeding 100, then they should be numbered consecutively by chapter. If translations are presented, the original text normally is presented as well in footnotes. Guidance in Turabian germane to the citation of sources on the internet in terms of evaluation for reliability and form used for citation must be followed.

Illustrative materials include photographs, charts, graphs, tables, prints, maps, reproductions, renderings, hand-drawn items, and so forth. They may be included in the body of the text or in an appendix. If included in the text, the materials must be inserted as close as possible to their first reference in the text. The explanation of the illustrative material must precede the item, and the label must follow the illustrative material. If the materials are included in an appendix, the explanation must also precede the item. These materials may include reproductions of manuscripts, original texts, and translations.

Optional end matter may include an appendix or appendices, a glossary, a list of abbreviations (which may also appear with the preliminary pages) and addenda.

The text of the manuscript must be printed with a 12-point size Times New Roman, Garamond, Palatino Linotype, or Century Schoolbook font. Underlining or italics must be used to emphasize text, but not both. Bold typeface must not be used for emphasis. Proportional spacing and right-margin justification can be used, as long as hyphenation is used properly.

The text must appear on the paper so that the left-hand margin of the text runs along the 11-inch length of the paper and 8.5 inches represents the width of the top and bottom of the paper. Exceptions may be made for charts, graphs, drawings, and so forth. However, pages must always be paginated with 11 inches representing the length and 8.5 inches representing the width, regardless of the placement of charts, graphs, or drawings.

All margins must be one inch wide. A common error made in creating bottom and top margins is not adjusting the header and footer of the page. To do so, change the header and footer from the default of 0.5 inch to 1 inch to be sure you have the required one-inch margins both at the top and bottom of the page.

Double-space the text uniformly throughout the manuscript, with the exception of footnotes, quotations, and so forth. Refer to Turabian for proper spacing instructions.

Every page of the manuscript following the title page, with the exception of the abstract, must carry a number. Preliminary pages must be numbered in lower case Roman numerals. The text must be numbered in Arabic numerals, which continue consecutively throughout the remainder of the paper, including end matter.

Do not accompany page numbers with any other symbols. For example, the following methods are not acceptable: "Page 1," "Page One," "p. 1," "-1-," etc. Also, pages may not be supplemented, for example, 7a, 7b, 7c.

All preliminary page numbers must be centered at the bottom of the page. Additionally, all end matter, that is every page after the main text, including appendices and bibliography, must be paginated at center bottom throughout.

All text page numbers can either be centered at the top of the page, or appear in the upper right-hand corner, with the exception of those pages carrying a major heading, such as the first page of a chapter, in which case the number must be centered at the bottom of the page. Even if charts, illustrative materials, and so forth, are inserted in the manuscript in landscape format, the page numbers must appear on the page and be consistent with all other pages of text in portrait format.

On rare occasions, it will not be possible to place a page number on an illustration, photograph, or other special insert. Consider that page to have the next consecutive number, continuing the sequence on the following page.

### **Abstract**

The student must also complete a separate abstract of the thesis. The abstract must be written in English and contain no special characters, or any text written in a non-Roman alphabet. The text of the abstract must be double-spaced and must provide a concise summary of the following information: statement of the purpose, a description of the research methodology, and summary of conclusions. The abstract may not exceed a 350-word limit.

### **Completion of the Thesis and Criteria for Assessment**

The Supervisor shall certify the completion of the thesis (which includes the separate abstract) and its assessment by completing and signing the "Certification of Thesis Completion" form (Attachment 3). The name of the Second Reader is recorded, but the signature of the Second Reader is not required on the Certification form. The Supervisor shall submit this form by June 1. Any student who does not complete the thesis and submit the required documentation by the June 1 deadline, as outlined in this Guide, shall not be considered for graduation that year. Completion of the thesis includes submission of the required copies (including the separate abstract) and finalized arrangements for submitting a bound copy of the thesis and the separate abstract to the library (see the section below, "Academic Publication of the Thesis").

For an extension to complete the thesis beyond the June 1 deadline, the student must obtain the Supervisor's approval, and complete and submit a "Thesis Extension Approval" form (Attachment 4) to the Director for Master's Theses. Students who submit a "Thesis Extension Approval" form and complete their thesis by September 1 of that same year (after the June 1 deadline, but on or before September 1) shall graduate the next year and shall not be required to pay a thesis extension fee. Students who require more time (beyond September 1 after their initial thesis-writing semester), shall be billed a thesis extension fee of \$500 per year.

All completed theses are considered "Satisfactory," but the Supervisor may rate a thesis as "With Distinction" and recommend its future publication. Research is expected to reflect an organized, methodical, and scholarly approach. A thesis shall be assessed based on the following criteria: systematic presentation, organized research, critical consideration of sources, supporting documentation, acceptable language, and conformity to Turabian. All Master's theses must be written in English, unless a specific exception is made by the President based on a request made by the student and Supervisor.

### **Academic Publication of the Thesis**

Master's students are required to have their completed thesis papers printed and bound using the following specific guidelines,

Size: 8-1/2" x 11" (215.9 mm x 279.4 mm)

Cover: Hardbound in Buckram (Fabric) PS 588 ROYAL BLUE, with gold lettering.

Spine: author's last name, title (truncated as necessary), year.

Front Cover: blank is fine. Some binderies include title, author, year and degree (optional).

Paper: White, Acid Free or Archival.

One-sided vs. Two-sided printing: Two-sided printing preferred but optional; saves paper and shelf space.

The bound thesis and the separate abstract must be submitted to the Antiochian Heritage Library, 140 Church Camp Trail, Bolivar, PA 15923. In addition, Master's students shall provide a final copy of their approved thesis

and abstract in PDF format for publication on The Antiochian House of Studies website. The student shall submit this copy to the Director for Master's Theses, the Dean, the President, and the Librarian of the Antiochian Heritage Library (library@avcenterpa.org).

## Graduation

Students who complete their thesis by June 1 will graduate with their class. Those who complete their work after June 1 (in any given year) will graduate the following year. Completion of the thesis includes submission of the required copies (including the separate abstract) and finalized arrangements for academic publication of the thesis.

## Fees

The Thesis Semester Tuition Fee for Unit VI is \$765.00, which should be paid by January 10 of the year in question. The fee for an extension is \$500.00 per additional year. The Thesis Submission Fee is \$150.00. All fees are payable to Antiochian House of Studies. Checks are mailed to:

- TO PAY BY CHECK: Make checks payable to: Antiochian House of Studies

Mail to: Anna Nasser (anna.nasser@ahos.edu) AHOS Bursar, St. Luke Antiochian Orthodox Church, 13261 Dunklee Avenue, Garden Grove, CA 92840.

- TO PAY BY CREDIT CARD or ACH/Debit: Use the "Make a Payment" button in your Populi account. Please note that a 3% convenience fee is applied to credit card payments.

## Admission to the MTS, MDiv and MPCC -- General Guidance

*No student may pursue a thesis without first being admitted into the respective Master's program. In all cases, a prior bachelor's degree from an accredited institution is required for admission. There are three categories of possible applicants:*

1. **New applicants to AHOS** who wish to pursue the Master's degree and **who hold a prior bachelor's degree** should select the respective Master's program application when they first apply to the Antiochian House of Studies, whether for degrees of the Master of Theological Studies, Master of Divinity, or Master of Pastoral Care and Counseling.
2. **Current St. Stephen's Certificate students who hold a prior bachelor's degree** may apply to the respective Master's program by completing the "Bridge Application" by October 1 of their third semester, Unit III. This application is designed to be the "bridge" by which students migrate from Certificate to the respective Master's program, and should be received by October 1 of a student's second year of study in order for the student to continue directly to the Thesis after completing their Unit V courses. In special cases, students may contact the Director for Master's Theses for approval of a later application.
3. **Past graduates** of the St. Stephen's Certificate program **who hold a prior bachelor's degree** may be considered for the "Thesis Writing" phase if they apply within 7 years of completing their Certificate. AHOS graduates in this category should contact the Director for Master's Theses prior to submitting a Bridge Application.



**Acknowledgement**

Elements of these Instructions were derived from the publicly available program materials of The Catholic University of America, Brown University, Duke University, Southern University and A & M College, and the University of Toronto (particularly for its generative Artificial Intelligence policy). The administration of The Antiochian House of Studies expresses its gratitude to these institutions for making such materials available online.