

**Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary**  
**MTS 601/602 MTS Colloquium: Fall 2024**  
July 1st

Professor: Julie Ann Duncan – Pfeiffer 332

Time: Wednesday 1:30-3:30 pm Online – synchronous meetings

### **Course Description**

The primary purpose of the course is to aid MTS students in developing and writing the thesis. The Colloquium will also provide a space where fellow MTS students can find support and feedback, and form their own kind of academic community. Second year students will be expected to present and defend their thesis proposals within the course of the colloquium. The course will also offer tutorials with respect to various aspects of the thesis research and writing process, as well as guidance on the process of applying to the PhD programs (finding a good doctoral program for one's area of interest, developing a strong application, etc.). Students with other vocational aspirations will also support one another in discerning their preparations.

### **Course Goals**

Students in this course will:

- Receive preparation for researching and writing the MTS thesis
- Obtain guidance in building a strong course schedule for their proposed area of study
- Obtain direction on the process of applying to doctoral programs.
- Begin to build an academic community with their fellow MTS students
- Engage in peer feedback

### **Course Requirements**

- In order to obtain 2nd-year/advanced standing credit (3credits) students must present their thesis proposal within this term. **\*\*Note:** those presenting must arrange to have their thesis advisor present for that hour (please see to this as soon as we have set provisional dates). Presentations should include a presentation portion (25-30 minutes), and a discussion portion of 30-35 minutes.
- The thesis proposal will be posted **four** days in advance of class session (Saturday by 3 pm).
- Students are expected to read the proposal and be ready to offer constructive feedback.

## Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course students should be able to:

- Navigate relevant databases, formulate search terms, and do research in a digital environment
- Develop a short bibliography of essential reading that moves research interests forward
- Assemble a portfolio for application to a doctoral program
- Second-year students will be able to construct and defend a thesis proposal within their discipline.

Additionally students will gain experience in:

- The steps entailed in developing a thesis statement or argument
- Conversing across disciplines
- Peer review of fellow student proposals

## Resource Texts (NOT REQUIRED):

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colombo, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup and William Fitzgerald. *The Craft of Research*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2024. Now available at Thriftbooks.com for \$15.75

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018. \$8.99 on Amazon

Yaghjian, Lucretia. *Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: T&T Clark, 2015.

## Course Schedule

This schedule is **provisional** until we have confirmed dates with outside presenters, and until 2<sup>nd</sup> year students have chosen their dates and confirmed with their advisors. Please do not plan conflicts against our weekly meeting time until we have established the schedule of presentations.

### Sept 4

Introductions  
 Orientation to MTS colloquium  
 Projection of presentation schedule  
 Preparation for library orientation

### Sept 11

Orientation to Library Resources – Dr. Lucy Chung and Karis Blaker

Students: We have been intentional about planning this session for your needs. We also invite you to submit requests for what would be helpful to you and your work. It is okay if your question is specific and particular to your research! It may have more relevance for others than you realize.

### Sept 18

Writing a Thesis (Ms. Krista McNeil and J. Duncan)  
 Including:  
*More Tips on Research Methods*  
*Guidance on Process*  
*Strategies for Working through Blocks*  
*Scholarly Writing as a Spiritual Practice*

### Sept 25

Writing a Thesis Proposal  
 Review handout and examples on course site

**Oct 2** Research Day

*Short assignment:* Identify three to four *key* resources that will move you forward with your thesis idea or current interest (books, monographs, articles, essays, etc.).<sup>1</sup> Describe briefly (a paragraph for each) why they are important for you. Remember: Your research librarians are here to help, as are your thesis advisors.

- See the course site for examples from previous years
- Remember to follow proper citation format –(see [Turabian Citation Quick Guide](#))

**Please turn in this assignment by Saturday, October 5 - 2pm.**

**Oct 9** Discussion of short assignments**Oct 16**

For first year students:

*Planning your course program*  
*Planning your thesis credits*  
*The scope of a thesis*  
*Preparing for the midpoint evaluation*

**Oct 23**

Forging a Strong PhD Application  
 Including such components as:

*Finding the right graduate program for you*  
*Writing a Research Statement*  
*Writing a Personal Statement*  
*Selecting a Writing Sample*  
*Obtaining Strong Letters of Reference*  
*Preparing an Academic Resume for a Graduate School Application*

**Oct 30**

Wellness Check-in

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<sup>1</sup> If you have not yet settled on a thesis topic this is your chance to explore something in your discipline that intrigues you. Enjoy!

<b>Nov 6</b>	Question and Answer Session with Garrett faculty panel
<b>Nov 13</b>	Question and Answer Session with MTS graduates
<b>Nov 20</b>	Student Presentations
<b>Nov 27</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Recess</b>
<b>Dec 4</b>	Student Presentations
<b>Dec. 11</b>	Student Presentations

***Important dates to keep in mind for Spring 2025***

**March 31:** Due date for MTS thesis *to advisor* (penultimate draft)

**April 25** Due date for *final approved* MTS thesis to ProQuest & approval forms to registrar

**Appendix Resources for style and citation of sources**

[Turabian Citation Quick Guide](#)

This is a handy quick reference guide to how to cite sources. This is not a bibliography manager; it will not formulate your citation for you. Rather, you can find examples of the various types of citations here.

[The Writing Center](#)

Here you will find several resources for style and citation, as well as other writing helps! It is brimming with helpful information.

Also, please do note there is assistance specifically tailored for MTS students!

“MTS students can request help from a writing specialist at any stage during the process to get help with their thesis--making sure it is clear, well-organized, focused, and coherent. Student proofreaders also can help you finalize your paper, making sure there are no grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors; the presentation is clear; citations are accurate and complete; heads and subheads are formatted consistently; chapter titles and page numbers are accurate.”

Remember that you have a handout – [Guidelines and Template for MTS Thesis](#)-- for help formatting your thesis (this is posted at the top of our course site and at the Writing Center).

**(Note: You will find links on the Writing Center site which will allow you to arrange sessions for any of the above.)**