MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY DEGREE

POLICY MANUAL

LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
At
GETTYSBURG

61 Seminary Ridge
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325

Revised 5/04

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The Master of Sacred Theology degree (STM) is a key component of the life-long learning programs of Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary. Our STM program is designed with several purposes in mind:

- ecumenical theological setting for students from all denominational backgrounds.
- offering the student an opportunity to concentrate in a specific theological area in a flexible format
- giving students the opportunity to enroll in STM courses as part of their STM degree work
- relating our degree program requirements to other institutions through cross-registration and credit transfer arrangements.
- inviting students to a seminary setting which continues to utilize, develop and incorporate the features of learning technology in the structures of the STM program.

As you work through an STM program, please use this manual to guide your work. Periodic updates of policies will be made available on paper and on our seminary website.

Gettysburg Lutheran seminary welcomes you to this program with the hope that it will provide nurture, new perspectives and responsiveness to the realities of ministry in the twenty-first century!

VISION STATEMENT

The seminary's Vision Statement provides a foundation for all of its programs.

Bearing witness at the crossroads of history and hope,
the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
proclaims Jesus Christ to a restless world
by preparing students for faithful discipleship.
As we listen to God's Word in community,
the Holy Spirit empowers us to lead in church and world
through worship, education, service and encouragement

In light of this vision statement, the seminary’s degree programs prepare students who are:

- Faithful disciples able to proclaim and embody Jesus Christ to a restless world through the context of various Christian communities.

- Articulate theologians sustained by their knowledge of the faith tradition and equipped to integrate programmatic opportunities for theological reflection and practice.

- Vocationally equipped to lead, learn and witness in Church and world.

I. THE STM PROGRAM AT GETTYSBURG SEMINARY

A. Purposes, Goals, Objectives

The Master of Sacred Theology (STM) is an advanced academic degree that enables men and women to continue their studies beyond a basic level degree in divinity (M.Div. or other first graduate theological degree that provides equivalent theological background and evidence of aptitude for advanced theological study). It presupposes both the completion of a first professional degree and willingness to attend to serious theological study at an advanced level.

Purpose: The Master of Sacred Theology degree is to provide an opportunity for concentrated study in a given area of theological inquiry and to provide a more advanced mastery of one area or discipline of theological study than is normally provided at the basic degree level.

Goals: This degree is designated to provide an opportunity for concentrated study in a given area of theological inquiry for those who have completed a first theological degree or its equivalent, by promoting advanced understanding in a particular theological discipline, by increasing the student's knowledge of research resources and methodologies, and by increasing her or his knowledge and competency for ministry in all its variety.

Objectives: Completion of this degree will prepare the student to:

- Achieve mastery of primary questions, ideas, methodologies and sources related to the chosen area of theological focus.
- Engage in knowledgeable and creative thinking, writing and speaking in the chosen area of research.
- Apply the knowledge gained to other contexts of theology and ministry.
- Demonstrate proficiency in research, writing and thinking.

The program of studies may take place directly following completion of the M.Div., MAR, or other first graduate theological degree or may be entered into many years later. It may be pursued on a full-time residential basis or on a part-time basis.

This Manual describes policies and procedures currently in effect* in the Master of Sacred Theology program sponsored by The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

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*Later revisions of the Manual may affect your program so be sure to check the current updated copy of the manual on the LTSG web site at ltsg.edu or with the Admissions Office.

B. An Overview

1. Administration Oversight

Authorization to confer the Master of Sacred Theology degree is granted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Higher Education. Periodic evaluation and accreditation is the province of the Association of Theological Schools and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

At Gettysburg, the STM program functions under joint auspices of the Admissions Office and the MAR/STM Committee.

The Registrar handles registration and management of student files. The Business Office is responsible for the administration of fiscal matters. The MAR/STM Committee of the Seminary oversees academic issues related to the program including assignment of advisors, course content and petitions. All questions and queries must be submitted in writing to the committee.

The Faculty reserves for itself such prerogatives as (1) admissions; (2) final evaluation of candidate's work and recommendation to Board of Directors for the conferral of the degree.

2. Overall Degree Requirements

The STM degree is offered with a choice of two tracks:

a) The STM with thesis which consists of eight course units (3 or more credit hours) in advanced program courses (at LTSG these would be STM courses), a half course thesis research practicum and a thesis. Four of the eight courses and the thesis must be in the major focus area.

b) The STM with oral integrative examination (non-thesis) which consists of ten course units in advanced program courses a final oral integrative examination.

Four course units must be in the major focus area.

In either track, examples of possible focus areas are: Biblical Studies, Theology, Church History and Studies in Ministry.

C. Admissions

1. General Requirements

Admission to the Master of Sacred Theology program, according to ATS standards, "shall require the M.Div., or first graduate theological degree providing equivalent theological background, or its educational equivalent, and evidence of aptitude for advanced theological study." Specific admission requirements (policy and procedures) are outlined below.

Admission is on a "rolling" basis, with entrance into the program open on a year around basis. Successful applicants are then notified, assigned an advisor during their first semester of course work and informed of the dates, location, format and costs of advanced program course offerings at LTSG. Candidates are expected to contact their advisor as soon as possible to discuss their expected program and designate an area of major focus.

Admissions presupposes that:

- the student has a graduation grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better in the M. Div. or other first graduate theological degree.
- The student successfully completes all required Graduate School application forms, transcripts and references. When applicable, these materials must also include the appropriate English language examinations *(see page 9)*. Application forms for admission are available through the Admissions Office.

Duration of the Program

The duration of the program will vary with each candidate, depending on whether study is full-time or part-time, the scope of the candidate's professional responsibilities (if any), and the pace of progress toward the stated goals of the program. The program shall be completed in no less than one year and no more than six.

Be aware that students can rarely expect to complete the degree in one academic year. A thesis usually takes several months to complete. Courses are offered during the summer, and full-time students should expect to use at least the summer to complete course work or write the thesis.

2. Specific Requirements

"S.T.M. Admission Application" form: The student completes and submits this form which is available through the Admissions Office. The Admissions Office grants admission upon a positive review of the application.

Entrance Time: Students admitted to this program may enroll in S.T.M. courses offered in either semester, during the summer, or in the January term. Suitable courses offered through the Washington Theological Consortium and in cooperative arrangements with other seminaries are open for enrollment.

Specific inquiry by the student, following consultation with the student's advisor, is necessary in order to ascertain the acceptability of off-campus courses. Final authority for the approval of such courses rests with the Office of the Dean. Once the student receives approval from the Dean, they must register for the course through the Registrar's Office.

Relationship to the Doctor of Ministry Program: The Doctor of Ministry program is administrated through the Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia (LTSP) with D. Min. degrees being conferred through that institution on behalf of the seminaries in the Eastern Cluster of the Seminaries of the ELCA. Students may utilize the unique resources of Gettysburg Seminary in their focal areas and in the development and advisement of the Doctor of Ministry project. In addition to taking four courses at Gettysburg Seminary, students may draw on the resources of LTSG in the development and advisement of their required Project in Ministry.

3. Candidacy for the Degree

Candidacy for the two tracks is as follows:

a) STM Track with Thesis:

Successful completion of:

- eight full courses in the program,
- the successful completion of the "Practicum in Theological Research,"
- approval of a thesis proposal,
- and the acquisition of research competencies deemed to be required by the thesis proposal.

All course work, along with an approved thesis proposal, must be completed in a satisfactory manner before candidacy for the degree is granted. Action on candidacy shall be recorded on the face of the student's transcript, and may include one of the following: 1. approval; 2. denial; 3. approval pending removal of deficiencies.

b) STM Track: Course Work with Oral Integrative Examination (non-thesis)

- Successful completion of the ten (10) required courses.
- Successful completion of the bibliographic component related to the preparation of the oral integrative examination.
- Action on candidacy shall be recorded on the face of the student's transcript, and may include one of the following: 1. approval; 2. denial; 3 approval pending removal of deficiencies.

4. English Language Test

That, for admission to the advanced degree programs, applicants whose language of origin is not English and/or previous instruction is not in English, including all applicants from abroad, must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Test of Written English (TWE), administered by the Educational Testing Service and given regularly at many centers throughout the world, or they must provide other evidence of competence in English.

In either case, the student must also submit a letter from a professor (or other person who knows the student's academic writing) that vouches for the quality of the student's ability to read technical material and to write in English at a level suited for study in advanced level degrees. Note: TOEFL and TWE tests must have been taken within two years of the student's application to LTSG.

D. Coursework

Introduction:

Each course in the STM program of supervised study shall have designated beginning and concluding dates. All courses will be offered within the following calendar terms.

- Autumn semester: all work is due no later than January 15 of the upcoming year.
- Spring semester: all work is due no later than June 15.
- Summer courses: all work is due no later than August 15.

1. Course Categories

A course unit means one full-course (3 or more hours) or two half-courses. "Course units" include classroom courses of various types, such as, independent studies and courses taken through the media of distance learning/ --or- on-line STM courses from accredited institutions.

Classroom courses are held weekly in block timing during autumn, J-term, spring and summer. For full listing of course offerings in any year, consult the LTSG catalogue and Graduate Studies brochure

Courses are offered in other formats. These are:

a) Independent Study Courses

- In as much as peer interaction is an integral part of the STM program, independent studies in the program are normally limited to two courses.

- The student shall consult with his/her advisor prior to negotiating an independent study.
- A proposal for independent study, called a "ROSE Statement," shall include a statement of rationale, objectives, strategies, means of assessment; normally between three to five double-spaced typed pages and bibliography, listing a minimum of 10 books. This should be done after consultation with the student's adviser and course instructor.

- The student will then complete and sign an independent study proposal (guidelines available from the Registrar). These shall be submitted to Dean for approval and the signature of the faculty member. The student will receive a copy of the signed form from the Dean's Office.
- All independent studies require the same registration procedures as other courses, and all rules and deadlines concerning registration, fees, withdrawals, and extensions shall pertain.

b) Tutorials

- A tutorial is a class conducted by a professor for one student or for a small number of STM students.
- The description for any tutorial course is initiated by the faculty member and must be submitted for approval by the Dean.
- Tutorial courses are offered to obtain credit for a course not scheduled during a semester in which a student needs it and/or to enrich regular course offerings for students with a particular interest in the faculty member's field.
- Tutorial courses are to be arranged with the consent of and at the convenience of the instructor and approved by the Dean. Although they ordinarily will not carry a course fee, the final decision on the payment of fees rests with the Dean.

c) Intensive Courses

Such courses may be held over a limited period of time, such as a weeklong course in the summer session. Note: In some intensive courses the instructor may require an "additional day of instruction" that necessitates students returning to campus following the intensive week. In such a course, instructors will provide an option of doing additional work rather than returning to campus for students for whom such return would mean hardship.

d) Distance Education

A three year set of STM on-line courses is currently being offered (2003—2005) through the Eastern Cluster of the Seminaries of the ELCA. Because of the rapidly-changing nature of distance learning, please check with the Registrar prior to enrolling in an STM on-line course. The Project Director is Dr. Richard P. Carlson, Gladfelter Professor of Biblical Studies at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

e) Transfer Courses

To be eligible for transfer toward the STM degree, a course completed at another school shall meet the following requirements:

Not more than four units toward an advanced-level degree may be fulfilled through transfer credits.

- The course was taken for credit at a fully accredited institution.
- The course was taken in an advanced-level degree program.
- The student had completed the appropriate basic-level program before taking the course.
- The course is clearly relevant to the student's LTSG degree and is approved by the student's advisor.
- The course was taken within ten years prior to the student's admission to the STM program at LTSG.
- The student received a grade of B or better.
- If a student wishes to count for credit any course older than ten years, a petition must be made for that purpose to the MAR/STM Committee in writing.

Admitted students are responsible:

- for informing the LTSG Registrar when they have enrolled in a course at another accredited graduate institution, as approved by their advisor, and which they intend to use for transfer credit in the STM program; and

- for arranging, on completion of the course, for a transcript to be sent by the Registrar of that institution to the LTSG Registrar. Since a continuation fee is charged in any year when no work is done for credit, it is important to inform the LTSG Registrar when such work is being pursued. Credit will not be given and a continuation fee will be charged if no transcript is received.

2. Registration Procedures

a) Changing Course Registration

Students enrolled in combined STM courses may change their registration up to and no later than the second-class meeting. Thereafter STM registrants will receive their letter grade for their work in the course.

b) Withdrawal from Courses

Withdrawal from any course in the program without penalty must be effected before the beginning of the fourth meeting of said course. After that time,

students are expected to complete all course requirements as set forth in the course syllabus.

c) Reinstatement to the STM Program

A student seeking reinstatement will petition the MAR/STM Committee for re-admittance into the program. Such reinstatement will follow current entrance requirements and degree and must include a specific timeline for completing the STM degree.

d) Non-degree participation

Students not formally admitted to this program may take courses in the program for credit. If the student is then admitted to the program at a later date, no more than three full courses successfully completed before admission will be accepted into the program.

3. Grading System

Grade Requirements for the Degree
For successful completion of the STM degree students shall maintain an overall grade average of "B".

The student must maintain an overall average of B in the STM program. Students should be aware that only grades of a "B" or higher transfer to other graduate institutions.

A "C" grade is factored into the overall GPA and will be noted in the student's transcript. Receiving two grades of "C" for any two STM courses will be considered grounds for placing the student on academic probation.

Grading in this degree program:

A= Excellent (90-100); B= Good (80-89);
C= Unsatisfactory (70-79), F= Failure.

In the STM program, F designates failure. A student will be removed from the program after a period of four consecutive semesters in which s/he completes successfully no program work, or after s/h e receives an F in any course.

4. Extensions

a) Extensions of Time

The instructor of an STM course is entitled to formulate his/her own policy regarding whether or not extensions beyond those dates will be granted, under what conditions, and for how long. That policy is to be clearly stated in the course syllabus.

In no event shall the extended deadline for completion of coursework be more than three months beyond the end of the term or semester for which the course is registered. Requests for extensions beyond three months after the end of a term must be submitted in writing to the Dean and will be approved only in extreme circumstances when clear need is demonstrated.

b) Program Extensions

The maximum period within which the degree may be earned is six years from inception of study. Requests for extension of the six-year limit are addressed to MAR/STM Committee. Normally only one extension will be granted.

c) Credit for Combined STM/ D. Min. Degrees

Up to four courses of a conferred STM (or equivalent advanced level) degree count towards a DMin and up to four courses of a conferred DMin degree count towards an STM degree, provided that the STM major requirements are satisfied, and if the STM precedes the DMin, that the four courses that count also for the DMin must have been taken at least three years after completion of the M.Div. degree.

d) Changing STM Degree tracks

All students (even those who enter intending to write a thesis) are encouraged to keep all course outlines, notes, and course papers, etc., in the event they decide to switch to the non-thesis option.

E. The Advisor

The MAR/STM Committee shall nominate the advisor during the student's first semester of STM work, after indication of possible focal area by the STM registrant and after consultation with the proposed faculty advisor.

If a student is unsure about choice of focal area, an interim advisor will be appointed who will guide the student on selection of courses until a focal area is clearly designated. Then the student will inform the MAR/STM Committee of the chosen focal area and, if necessary, the Dean will recommend to the faculty a change of advisor.

If an advisor is “on leave,” “on sabbatical leave”, or leaves the faculty of the school, the need for replacement should be discussed by the candidate with the Dean.

F. Thesis Defense or Oral Integrative Examination

1. Thesis Defense

(see also page 17)

The Dean will appoint two additional faculty members who, together with the advisor, will form a committee or panel before which the student will defend the thesis. The advisor will chair the panel. The panel, after examining the candidate and his/her academic record, as well as the quality of the thesis, will recommend to the faculty whether the candidate shall be approved for the degree.

When warranted, the faculty panel may designate a thesis completed "with distinction" as a means of acknowledging exceptional work. This designation will be included in the graduation bulletin of the student's graduation year.

2. Oral Integrative Examination

(see also page 28)

In the STM track with course work only, successful completion of all ten courses and the oral integrative examination are required for graduation. The Dean will appoint two additional faculty members who, together with the advisor, will form the integrative examination committee.

The panel's meeting with the candidate for oral evaluation of the candidate's work will be held no later than three weeks prior to the date when the faculty meets to make recommendations to the Board of Directors of the Seminary for the awarding of the degree in any given year. Contact the Registrar for the date in any given year. A recommendation from the panel will go before the faculty for consideration, approval, and recommendation to the Board of Directors of the Seminary for awarding of the degree.

G. STM and the Lutheran Year

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America requires that all candidates for the ordained ministry who complete their Master of Divinity Degree at a non-ELCA seminary also complete a minimum of one year of residency at an ELCA seminary.

The following guidelines are for students whose circumstances will enable them to work toward an STM degree as they complete their Lutheran "Year of Residency" at LTSG. It is possible that students may wish to allot more than one academic calendar year to completion of the STM.

It is important that you read and become familiar with:

- The goals and directives for the year of residency in an ELCA seminary, which are printed in the ELCA Candidacy Manual.
- The Master of Sacred Theology (STM) program description in the LTSG catalog and the STM Policy Manual.

1. Guidelines:

- A M.Div. Degree is required for entrance into the STM program during one's Lutheran year at LTSG.
- No advanced standing in LTSG's STM program will be granted for Lutheran year students.
- The fulfillment of the ELCA's "Lutheran year" goals takes precedence during the year of residence. Students enrolled in the STM during this time are required to complete a statement describing how they intend to achieve the ELCA goals as

part of their program of study. The seminary's R.O.S.E. format (used for faculty syllabi) is suggested for such a statement.

- One's "chosen area of focus" for a "Lutheran year" STM, shall include some component of Lutheranism.
- A suggested course of study for an STM student as part of completing an ELCA "Lutheran year" STM is as follows:

2. STM Degree - With Thesis

- Complete the eight courses required for the STM degree during the year of residency. Plan to complete the thesis after the Lutheran year requirements are fulfilled.
- Choose four courses from the M.Div. curriculum (increased to an STM level through individual independent study arrangements with the professor), and four courses from the STM curriculum. This will give opportunity to gain a realistic understanding of ministry in a Lutheran context, and will foster the establishment of relationships with peers and future colleagues in ministry, both ELCA goals for the year of residency.
- Course selection should include courses in Lutheran worship, theology/confessions, and preaching. This also helps to fulfill ELCA goals for the residency year.

3. STM Degree - Integrative Oral Examination (non-thesis)

- Complete the ten courses required for the STM degree. Some course work may extend beyond the "Lutheran year" time frame.
- Choose four courses from the M.Div. curriculum (increased to an STM level through individual independent study arrangements with the professor). Course selection should include courses in Lutheran worship, theology/confessions, and preaching. These courses help to fulfill ELCA goals for the residency year and provide opportunity to gain a realistic understanding of ministry in a Lutheran context. Another advantage to being in courses with other degree students during the Lutheran year is the possibility of fostering collegial relationships with both peers and future colleagues in ministry, both ELCA goals for the year of residency.
- An additional six courses from the STM curriculum must accompany the four courses in the major area of focus
- On completion of all ten courses the student will successfully complete an oral integrative examination.

II. GUIDE TO PREPARATION OF THE S.T.M. THESIS

A. Nature, Purpose, and Scope

The STM thesis is a major research paper through which the student demonstrates the ability to engage in significant scholarship. It is to embody the results of original research and to substantiate a specific view.

A typical STM thesis is 75 to 125 pages in length, but the number of pages alone is not a sufficient measure of adequate scope. It needs to be long enough to provide the specificity and depth appropriate to the study, and short enough to maintain the requisite focus.

B. Supervision and Evaluation

Each candidate is guided in this phase of the program by a faculty advisor appointed by the MAR/STM committee in consultation with the faculty member.

The student is to take the initiative in arranging conferences with the advisor. Conferences may be arranged at any time, and ordinarily should be requested at least once monthly. This will assure that the student has prepared for and been engaged in adequate consultation at those stages which are especially important in the development of the thesis.

The final draft (also known as the Review Copy) is presented in three copies to the thesis advisor who distributes the copies to the faculty panel. Students are encouraged to arrange for bibliographic review by the Librarian early in the writing process, and well before submitting the final draft. The panel reads the document and meets with the candidate for formal discussion and final adjudication of the thesis. Two copies of the final, approved thesis manuscript go the Registrar who will forward on to the Librarian.

C. Sequence and Calendar

The sequence of steps in thesis preparation is set forth in section IV below; the timing (calendar) of the steps will vary according to the candidate's circumstances. It is helpful in planning for a thesis to begin with the end date and consider the steps in reverse order to establish a candidate's individual calendar.

The awarding of degrees occurs at the annual Commencement in mid-May. For award of the STM degree in a given May, the timing of the preceding steps will vary according to the time available for study, research, and writing. In all cases, the limit is six years from inception of program until award of degree; program extensions are available only with faculty approval one year at a time and with payment of the annual extension fee.

D. Steps in the Process

1. Selection of Subject

The candidate for the degree is expected to take the initiative in selecting the subject area for the thesis. The student in consultation with the advisor delineates the subject, with consideration given to the following queries:

- Is the subject significant? This is a judgment in which the advisor and the student must concur since the subject should be meaningful to the student.
- Is the scope of the subject sufficiently limited to allow adequate treatment within the allotted time and with the facilities at the student's command?

2. The Proposal

Once the student and advisor have agreed concerning the subject and provisional title, the student prepares a thesis proposal according to the guidelines below. Consultation with the advisor in this stage is crucial. It will be helpful to consult the criteria for evaluation of a thesis.

a) Writing the proposal

- State the title.
- Describe the rationale of the thesis. This involves setting forth the origin and background of the study, its implications, the reason for interest in it, and the need for it.
- Give a general statement of the thesis. Provide a clear statement of the thesis in its broader relationship. Define the area and scope of the study, and indicate the basic proposition, situation, question, or technique, which the thesis will examine. State clearly the desired goal or outcome of the thesis. It is from this general statement that the specific formulation of the thesis will be derived.
- Indicate previous studies relating to the thesis. The student shall present a brief description of earlier studies, which have bearing on the proposed investigation. This description should contain a statement of what earlier studies have revealed and should carry reference to areas of the general problem, which remain, unexplored or which have been inadequately explored. In the event the student finds no studies relating to the investigation proposed, note shall be made of that fact. The findings in this step ought to indicate why the student feels justified in carrying out the investigation.
- The formulation and limitation of the thesis. This involves a precise statement of what the student proposes to do. In some instances, it will be helpful for the student to clarify the intentions by adding to the positive statement an explanation of matters that lie beyond the limits of the study.
- Identify sources and prepare a preliminary bibliography. When sources are contemporaneous with the investigator, a relatively full description is required. The student shall indicate how source materials are to be handled. With the proposal, include the bibliography compiled to this point.

- State the procedures of investigation. Describe fully the procedure(s) to be followed in making the study. This should include a clear explanation of the steps one expects to follow in carrying out the investigation. This is not a preview of conclusions, but a statement of the processes to be used in the various phases of the thesis.
- Include a tentative outline of the document. This should show at least the larger sections, such as chapters and major subdivisions. It should indicate how one intends to articulate the work and should reflect careful preliminary investigation and planning.

b) Submitting the proposal

Submit the completed proposal to the advisor in one copy along with a Thesis Registration Form. The proposal deadline is pragmatic, not formal: it is governed by the February 1 deadline for submission of the complete review copy of the thesis, and by the time and energy that can be committed by the student in moving from proposal to completed thesis. In general, students are well advised to submit a proposal one year in advance of the expected date of graduation.

The advisor will review the proposal and may request a meeting with the student as part of this review.

- If the proposal is accepted, the advisor will sign the registration form to indicate acceptance and present the form to the Registrar. The Registrar will assess the thesis fee. The fee is payable within two months of approval, and it is not refundable for any reason, including termination of the student's program.
- If not accepted, the proposal will be returned with the registration form to the student for revision and resubmission. When the proposal is accepted, the steps of paragraph (a) above will apply.

c) Drafts

The number and nature of preliminary drafts will depend upon a combination of advisor expectations, student capacities, and the nature of the topic. In some cases, submission of material chapter by chapter may be requested; in others, it may be appropriate to develop a series of complete drafts at varying levels of refinement.

It will be helpful at this stage to have previewed the requirements of style and presentation, which apply to the final version of the thesis *(see #5 on page 21)*.

d) The Review Copy

This is the complete thesis, including abstract, title page, chapter headings, headings of leading subdivisions, and bibliography. It is prepared according to the style and formatting requirements of the final archival copies (*see E on page 22)*, except that it is submitted to the thesis advisor in three copies on plain photocopier paper. The review copy deadline is February 1 proceeding the May in which graduation is desired.

If the tentative outline was carefully constructed, it will require few changes. However, there may be places where it will need modification by transposition, extension or omission. The following considerations pertain:

- Write with a view to attractive literary style. Write so that the reader can readily gather clear-cut ideas about the subject. Write for the reader.
- Pay special attention to accuracy in the choice of words and to variety in both vocabulary and sentence structure. The student is responsible for typographical corrections; copy read meticulously.
- The Introduction should contain:

  - a statement of the specific issue to be studied;
  - a review of previous studies of the subject;
  - a brief description of the sources, the materials, and the methods employed in the investigation;
  - the limitations of the present study (geographical, chronological, topical, institutional, and the like);
  - background information to assist the reader's understanding;
  - an indication of the order in which the main divisions of the subject are to be treated in the body of the document.

Pay special attention to logical development and to connections between the divisions. The divisions, subdivisions and subordinate heads must be so chosen and stated that each will lead to an exhaustive treatment of its part of the subject and avoid repetition and overlapping, and at the same time contribute to the progress of thought. Each paragraph will concern itself with one matter only, and each sentence will contribute directly to the major topic. Special care must be taken to indicate the relations of part to part by means of topical and transitional sentences. Each division and subdivision should begin with a paragraph that will link it to the preceding paragraph and introduce the next stage of the argument, and it should close with a paragraph which will summarize its contents and indicate its bearing on the report thus far.

After the data of the document have been presented clearly and logically, the conclusion of the whole should be stated succinctly. The final interpretation, solution, or statement of findings is the fruit of the study.

3. Review and Defense

When the faculty panel has read the review copy, a meeting will be scheduled for student and panel. This is the occasion for a sharing of the panel's analysis and the student's defense of the thesis. The panel may approve the thesis as submitted or approve with minor typographical corrections required, or the panel may require substantive revision prior to a second review. Normally, the student will meet face-to-face with the panel; in exceptional cases where travel would result in hardship; the defense may be conducted by telephone conference or by other electronic media. The Librarian will inform the candidate of the results of the bibliographic review and arrange a face-to-face interview if appropriate.

4. Revisions

If required revisions are *minor*, the student will make the corrections and move directly to the final submission copies. The advisor will make a final inspection before ratification, and then forward the two submission copies to the Registrar along with a statement of final approval.

If revisions are to be *substantive* (matters of organization or argument, or even a large number of typographical errors), the student will be asked to submit a second (revised) review copy.

Note about timing: For graduation in May, consult the Registrar so that you are clear on dates.

5. Final Submission (Archival Copies)

Use good quality, acid-free paper of at least 75% rag content.

The quality of print needs to be clear and dark. Use a good typewriter or printer ribbon. If using a word processor with dot matrix printer, print in the near-letter-quality mode. (It may be well to submit a print sample to the Librarian in advance for assessment of its adequacy.) The second copy may be a photocopy of the original.

Prepare two copies of the thesis and submit them to the Registrar by May 1st preceding graduation. (One copy is for library archives, and one is for library circulation.) Do not punch holes in the pages or bind them in any way. The library will bind both copies. (The student is urged to make a personal copy.)

With each copy of the thesis, provide an abstract (same margins, but single-spaced). This is a summary document of not more than one thousand words. It should enable one who does not have time to read the whole thesis to take in at a glance the specific issue to be studied, the method, the principal facts and the solution or findings.

E. Thesis Format

1. General Criteria for Evaluation of the Thesis

Accuracy. Have the data, quotations, and references been checked, and are the facts on which the conclusion is based stated clearly and accurately?

Objectivity. Do the conclusions largely depend on the writer's own opinions or opinions quoted from others? Where opinions are given, are they supported by factual data? Are the opinions of reputed authorities accepted as fact without further investigation or criticism? Is the significance of the findings judiciously discerned and stated?

Impartiality. Is there a sincere search for the truth regardless of whether or not it may require the revision or even the abandonment of a hypothesis? Is any evidence omitted which speaks against the conclusion drawn by the writer? Is any evidence omitted which speaks in favor of it? Are the data fairly interpreted, so that merely possible fact is distinguished from probable or certain fact?

Logic. Is the document developed logically, and is it free from fallacies? Does it avoid ambiguous and shifting terms, reasoning from analogy, reasoning from silence, begging the question and all forms of irrational evidence?

Literary Style. Is it written in language that is accurate, suited to the theme, interesting and cultured?

Length. This depends upon the subject. Some theses can be presented in briefer form, but others may require considerably more than one hundred pages. There is no virtue in "padding." Quotations from secondary sources should be kept to a minimum, and all extraneous and repetitious matter should be rigorously excluded.

Clarity. Can the reader understand exactly what the writer has done and said?

Creativity. While the thesis is not expected to be a new contribution to knowledge, it should show imagination in the various steps of selecting and defining the subject, assembling the material for the body of the report and drawing conclusions. Such things as a fresh approach to the subject, new interpretation of data, raising questions that arise in the course of the study and suggestions for further investigation add to the value.

Theological/Biblical Clarity. In most cases, S.T.M. theses have reference to a grounding in a theological tradition or biblical basis. Such material should be related to the main thrust of the thesis and presented clearly.

2. Format of the Thesis

a) General Layout, Format and Style

- Leave a one and one-half inch margin at the left on each page and at least three-quarters of an inch on the other three sides. The same margins apply to charts, graphs, tables, and maps. Use a five-to-ten space indentation for paragraphing.

- Double space the body of the manuscript. Single space long quotations, footnotes, and similar special material.
- The project document should otherwise follow the stylistic recommendations of A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, latest edition.

b) Criteria of Sources

Use the style of Turabian with footnotes and endnotes with a bibliography. See Turabian, particularly chapters 9, 10, and 11. An example of a footnote: Rebecca Smith, Lifelong Education: Reflections of a Teacher (Philadelphia: Bell Press, 2001), 54.

In this style, the bibliographic citation would be:

Smith, Rebecca. Lifelong Education: Reflections of a Teacher. Philadelphia: Bell Press, 2001.

Other styles or style manuals may be used with the permission of the thesis advisor.

c) Bibliography/Reference List

The bibliography or reference list at the end should include all (but only) the books and articles that have been used by the writer in preparing the project document. It should be divided into two sections, one for the primary, and the other for the secondary works. If there are any important works on the subject, which were not available to the writer, they may be listed separately and the fact that they were not consulted should be mentioned.
Every monographic item in the bibliography or reference list should contain the following information: (a) the full name of the author or editor; (b) the exact title of the work as it appears on the title page; (c) the name of the translator and/or editor, if there is one; and, (d) the place, publisher, and date of publication.

Bibliographic citations for electronic media should include: author's last name, author's first name, title (in quotation marks), title of complete work, name of site, date, http: address, and date of your visit to the site. It might look like this: Yule, James. "The Cold War Revisited: A Splintered Germany" [Online]. Available http://usa.coldwar.server.gov/index/cold.war/countries/former.soviet.block/G/germany.html (November 5, 2001).

d) The Title Page

The sample Title Page is on page 25. The cover page must conform exactly to that example. Notice the margins required, the use of upper and lower case, the spacing, and the date (month and year of commencement, *e.g*. May, 2001).

e) The Approval Page

The sample Approval Page is on page 26 and includes the dated signature of each member of the faculty panel. It should conform to the example.

f) Thesis Registration Form

The sample Thesis Registration Form is on page 27. Use this form in submitting the thesis proposal.

(TITLE HERE IN CAPS)

A THESIS SUBMITTED BY

(Your Name)

TO THE FACULTY OF

THE LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT GETTYSBURG

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of

MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY

(date: use month and year only)
The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg

(Sample Approval Page)

APPROVED

_____ Date:_____
(Type faculty advisor's name)

_____ Date:_____
(Name of faculty panel member)

_____ Date:_____
(Name of faculty panel member)

I hereby affirm that all work done for this thesis is my own, and that this work has not been previously presented for credit towards any other academic degree or for any other academic course.

_____ Date:_____
(type name of candidate)

ORAL INTEGRATIVE EXAMINATION REGISTRATION FORM

for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology (S.T.M.)
[SUBMISSION OF ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY]

[Consult section IV of STM Oral Integrative Examination]

Submit this form to your advisor along with one copy of the annotated bibliography.

STUDENT NAME: _____
[Last] [First] [Initial]

ADVISOR: _____

IF THE ORAL INTEGRATIVE EXAMINATION IS APPROVED	
Advisor, please sign and date here to indicate approval and forward this form to the Registrar.	
_____	_____
[signature]	[date]
_____	

IF THE EXAMINATION IS NOT APPROVED
Advisor, please return this form and one copy of the description evaluation to the student.

III. STM DEGREE: WITH ORAL INTEGRATIVE EXAMINATION (NON-THESIS)

A. Nature, Purpose and Scope: Protocols for the Non-Thesis Track S.T.M.

The non-thesis track for the S.T.M. will consist of ten (10) courses and an oral integrative examination., four (4) courses shall be in an area of major focus and an annotated bibliography of no less than 30 entries.

At the outset of the program, an advisor will be appointed by the MAR/STM Committee. The advisor will approve the choice of courses and also chair the oral integrative examination.

Upon successful completion of the ten courses for the degree (with a grade average of B or higher in courses of the area of focus), or in the final semester of study, the student will file the request for an oral examination with the Registrar. The examination will cover the area of concentration and will be conducted by the advisor and one other faculty member.

In the case of an unsatisfactory examination, students normally will be granted one opportunity for re-examination.

No more than three (3) external courses (from accredited institutions) may be transferred in for credit in the non-thesis track.

B. Sequence and Calendar

The timing (calendar) of the steps will vary according to the candidate's circumstances. It is helpful in planning to begin with the end date and consider the steps in reverse order to establish a candidate's individual calendar. In all cases, the limit is six years from inception of program until award of degree; program extensions are available only with approval by the MAR/ STM Committee for one year and with payment of the extension fee.

The awarding of degrees occurs at the annual Commencement in mid-May. For award of the S.T.M. degree in a given May, the request for the oral examination must be submitted to the Registrar by the February 1 immediately preceding. The oral examination shall occur no later than March 1 in the year in which the degree is to be granted.

C. Coursework

The STM with oral integrative examination consists of ten course units in advanced program courses plus an oral integrative examination that draws together the learnings in the major area of study. At least four of the courses must be in the major area of study which the student has chosen. Examples might be: Biblical Studies, Theology, Church History and Studies in Ministry. The oral integrative examination may be taken at any time after the completion of the required ten courses.

Each candidate will be assigned a faculty advisor appointed by the MAR/ STM Committee. At the time the request for the oral examination is filed with the Registrar, the Dean also will appoint two additional faculty members who, with the advisor, will constitute the panel which conducts the oral examination.

Other:

- Occasionally, in both the STM with Thesis and the STM with Oral Integrative Examination, students may take a M.Div. senior elective which is up-graded to an advanced level. Normally no more than two such upgraded courses will be taken, but in special-circumstances more may be allowed provided that "at least one-half of the work required shall be in courses designed for students in advanced programs" (ATS standards, 1996).
- In both the STM With Thesis and the STM With Oral Exam, up to three course-units may be transferred in from advanced level programs in other accredited institutions, provided they have not been used for any other degree, and provided that the requirements of the major are met. LTSG up-grade guidelines will apply to any M.Div. senior elective for which transfer is sought.

D. Bibliography for Final Oral Integrative Exam

The annotated bibliography should be prepared in consultation with the student's advisor and the librarian. Early consultation with the librarian is encouraged in order to confirm that the appropriate format is used. The purpose of the annotated bibliography is to provide an opportunity for the student to deepen her or his expertise in their specialization through reading beyond what is required for coursework.

The annotated bibliography should also reflect the objectives of the STM program and should include no fewer than 30 entries.

E. The Oral Integrative Examination

The S.T.M. oral examination is the way in which the student demonstrates significant mastery of an area of academic concentration the intent of the oral examination is to ensure that the student is able to integrate the material covered in the courses in the area of concentration and is also capable of thoughtful theological reflection upon that material.

A typical S.T.M. oral examination is normally no more than two hours in length. It is a question and answer discussion of the material addressed in the four courses which constitute the concentration, with a focus on the integration of the material and theological reflection upon it. The examination panel will not therefore repeat assessment of particular course material, but rather will ask the student to draw together the varied course learnings into an integrated whole and thus demonstrate mastery of the area of concentration.

In the STM with Integrative Oral Examination, the candidate shall prepare for examination under the supervision of the faculty advisor. The candidate shall be examined by the advisor and two additional members of the faculty appointed by the Dean. This panel of three, upon satisfactory completion of the oral exam and the completion of all course work with requisite grade point average, will recommend to the faculty whether the candidate shall be approved for the degree.

The student is to take the initiative in arranging conferences with the advisor as necessary for preparation for the oral examination. This will assure that the student has prepared for-and been engaged in adequate consultation at those stages which are especially important in the preparation for the oral examination. *(see S.T.M. Oral Integrative Examination Form Report on page 31)*

F. S. T. M. Oral Integrative Examination Form Report

Student Name:

Commentary by Advisor:

Grade:_____

Advisor_____ Date:_____

Faculty _____Date:_____

Faculty_____Date:_____

IV. APPENDIX

A. STM Program Fees

See the current LTSG Seminary Catalog for the fees applicable to the following items:

Application Fee (non-refundable)	$35.00
Course Fee	$550.00
Program Continuation Fee *(if no work for credit in the preceding year)*	$25.00
Thesis Advisement and Oral Exam Fee	$525.00
Oral Integrative Examination Fee	$525.00
Graduation Fee	$75.00

NOTE: Fees for courses taken at other institutions for transfer credit or as part of an independent study are the responsibility of the student and are paid directly to the institutions at which the courses are taken. Room and Board during any periods in residence, travel, books, supplies, etc., carries additional costs.

B. Contact Information

The following names and addresses may be useful in varied ways in the STM program in terms of registration, scheduling and completion of your degree work.

Reverend Dr. Brooks Schramm	Dir. Of Graduate Studies 61 Seminary Ridge Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325 Tel. (717) 334-6286, Ext. 2123 e-mail: bschramm@ltsg.edu
Dr. Marty Stevens	Registrar Tel. (717) 334-6286, Ext. 3006 e-mail: mstevens@ltsg.edu
Ms. Julie Ritter	Administrative Assistant to the Dean Asst. Registrar Tel. (717) 334-6286, Ext. 3007 email: jritter@ltsg.edu
	Graduate Studies Committee Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary 61 Seminary Ridge Gettysburg, PA 17325

Website Information

1. Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary	www.ltsg.edu (see appropriate links)
2. The Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia	www.ltsp.edu
3. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	www.elca.org