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THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THEOLOGY WITH A SPECIALIZATION IN PERSON, MARRIAGE, AND FAMILY (Ph.D.)

Introduction

The purpose of the Ph.D. program is the formation of students toward an understanding of person, marriage, and family, in accord with the mission statement of the Institute. The program prepares students to carry out significant research and publication and qualifies students for academic positions in universities, colleges, and seminaries.

Admissions Requirements

Admission to the Ph.D. program requires the successful completion of a master's degree in theology, philosophy, or a related field and the completion of the application process as outlined on the appropriate admissions form. Prior to acceptance, an on-site interview is normally required.

Degree Requirements

The Ph.D. program is a 45-credit program (15 courses); course work is to be completed over five semesters. Ph.D. students must be in residence for full-time study during the first three years of the program, and ordinarily for the two years of dissertation writing. Full-time study is defined as taking three courses per semester and fulfilling the requirements of the Symposium, which meets four times each semester.

Proficiency in four languages is required of all Ph.D. students: scholastic-ecclesiastical Latin, New Testament Greek, and two modern languages, as delineated below.

Additionally, students are expected to complete successfully the two foundational works examinations and qualifying examinations by the end of January of the sixth term of study, as delineated below.

Following completion of coursework, language requirements, foundational works examinations, and qualifying examinations, Ph.D. students complete the dissertation prospectus by November 1 of the seventh semester of study. After the prospectus has been approved, students are expected to complete their dissertations in two years.

Finances

All students admitted to the Ph.D. program are awarded a scholarship in the form of full tuition remission and a living stipend for five years. Students are responsible for the payment of all applicable annual or occasional fees (registration fee, student activity fee, graduation fee, etc.). Until the end of the student's fifth year in the program, tuition remission also covers the dissertation fee; beginning in the sixth year, the student is responsible for the dissertation fee as well.

Although Ph.D. students are not required to reapply annually for the tuition remission and the living stipend, continuing to receive both is dependent on continued enrollment in good standing

and satisfactory academic progress. During coursework, students must maintain at least a 3.5 GPA and complete 80% of the course credits attempted. More information may be found in the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy section of the Student Handbook and in the “Courses” section below.

Courses

Ph.D. courses are generally offered on a three-year cycle. Students normally register for three courses each semester, with the guidance and approval of the Program Advisor.

In order that adequate time may be devoted to courses and to preparing for language examinations, foundational works examinations, and qualifying examinations, students may not, without permission, enroll in more than three courses in one semester. Students can enroll in additional courses only after having obtained approval from the Ph.D. Program Advisor.

Ph.D. students who are new to the Institute are typically required to take additional courses at the master’s or licentiate level. With the permission of the Ph.D. Program Advisor and the fulfillment of an additional writing requirement, one of these courses may be substituted for a Ph.D.-level course. Special permission is needed when any course is taken in addition to the normal requirements of the program.

Where the curriculum of the Ph.D. program does not cover a topic of importance to a student’s anticipated research area, that student may, with the guidance and approval of the Ph.D. Program Advisor, either take one course during his or her coursework at another institution of higher education associated with the Institute or take one directed reading or research course with a member of the Institute faculty, depending on the circumstances. Students should meet with the Program Advisor to discuss these alternatives and to decide on a solution that is best suited to the students’ needs, well in advance of registration week. Once the best course of action has been established, the student may consult the proposed professor of the directed reading course or cross-register through the Office of the Registrar. Students seeking to take a directed reading or research course must submit a complete syllabus, composed with the oversight of the faculty member, which must then be submitted to the Ph.D. Program Advisor for approval well in advance of registration. The syllabus must include a course description and a statement of the course’s objective, in addition to the readings, the schedule of meetings, and the writing and other pertinent course requirements.

With the permission of the Program Advisor, students who have completed the required 45 credits of coursework may register for up to two audited courses at no cost over the remainder of their enrollment at the Institute. (Audited courses in excess of these two would require payment of the Institute’s audit fee, as set forth in the Academic Catalog for that year.) In each case the theme of the course(s) proposed for audit should relate directly to the student’s dissertation work or otherwise contribute to his or her progress in writing the dissertation, in order to receive permission from the Program Advisor to register.

All courses must be completed with a grade of B- or above; grades of C or below are not counted toward completion of the degree but are included in the calculation of grade-point average. Ph.D. students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.5 during their coursework and are automatically under

“probationary status” if they drop below the GPA minimum. The faculty academic committee reserves the prerogative of permitting the student to continue or not in the program if his or her GPA should fall below 3.5. If a student is unable to maintain this GPA at the end of the third semester of study, he or she ceases to be a Ph.D. student. Furthermore, unsatisfactory written work, failure to complete program requirements on a timely basis, or failure to comply with other guidelines or to make adequate progress in the degree program may result in appropriate action up to and including dismissal from the program. An appeal of this decision may be directed to the Dean, whose decision will be final in all cases.

Languages

Students are required to demonstrate reading proficiency in scholastic-ecclesiastical Latin, New Testament Greek, and two of the following modern languages: French, Spanish, Italian, or German. Proficiency is ordinarily demonstrated by successful completion of a written examination administered by Institute faculty.

One ancient and one modern language examination must be taken before the end of the second semester. The remaining language examinations must be taken by the end of the fourth semester.

An additional language may be required, depending on the dissertation topic.

Language examinations are administered four times per year, in September, November, January, and April, as announced. Language examinations are two hours long, and use of a dictionary is allowed. Examination responses are to be typewritten on computers provided by the Institute. Students obtain a pass when their translation of the text administered shows that the student possesses an adequate capacity to read, understand, and use a text in its original language.

To satisfy the language requirement in one of the modern languages, the following CUA language courses may be substituted for the proficiency exam: TRS 501 Theological German; GER 500 Reading for Comprehension; FREN 500 Reading for Comprehension; ITAL 500 Reading for Comprehension; or SPAN 500 Reading for Comprehension. These courses must be completed with a grade of at least B+ (in a course with letter grades) or Pass (in a Pass/Fail course). Students wishing to register for a language course at CUA should follow the usual cross-registration procedures. In addition, students who successfully complete one of the Institute-sponsored Greek or Latin summer courses with a B+ grade on the final exam may substitute that course for the proficiency exam.

Qualifying examinations may not be taken until the language requirements have been fulfilled.

Symposium

The Symposium consists in monthly evening seminars on selected “Great Books” (and occasionally works of art or music), for the purpose of developing a community of conversation among all Ph.D. students and the faculty around the themes of God, person, love, marriage, and family as these have been articulated by, and shape, the tradition of Christianity and the West. This community of conversation is integral to both the method and the substance of the educational mission of the Institute. An overarching concern of the conversation is to explore the sense in

which the meaning and dignity of human life are recognized and can finally be sustained only from within a culture of obedient and free gratitude. John Paul II wrote often of a “civilization of love” or again a “culture of life.” The Symposium examines civilization, love, and life as matters above all of what the Greeks termed “*morphosis*,” or “*morphe*,” of being formed, hence of “form.” Literature and art (along with the theology and philosophy comprising the rest of the curriculum) constitute a primary mode of this fully human formation.

Each student submits a 1200-word type-written, double-spaced essay prior to each Symposium discussion. The question for the reflective paper will be distributed approximately a month prior to each Symposium.

If a student misses the Symposium, he or she is required to submit a 3000-word essay to the leader of the missed seminar no later than 7 days after the Symposium has been held.

A student must receive a grade of “pass” for each Symposium discussion, based on the short paper and on participation in the discussion. Each student is required to participate actively in the discussion at each Symposium.

The Symposium reading list follows a three-year cycle. The 2025-26 academic year will cover Year A, as listed below.

Year A

1. Homer, *The Iliad*
2. Plato, *The Symposium*
3. Homer, *The Odyssey*
4. Aeschylus, *The Oresteia*
5. Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone*
6. Virgil, *The Aeneid*
7. Dante, *The Divine Comedy (Inferno)*

Year B

1. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*
2. Cervantes, *Don Quixote*
3. Goethe, *Faust*
4. Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*
5. Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*
6. Wojtyła, *Selected Writings*
7. Péguy, *The Mystery of the Charity of Joan of Arc*

Year C

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*
2. Undset, *Kristin Lavransdatter* (3 vols.)
3. Bernanos, *The Diary of a Country Priest*
4. Claudel, *The Satin Slipper*
5. Wilder, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and *Our Town*
6. Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited*

7. O'Connor, *Wise Blood* and selected stories

This list is subject to revision. The books for each semester are announced in advance.

Foundational Works

The foundational works reading lists cultivate both the breadth and depth of students' knowledge of theology, philosophy, and of the Catholic intellectual tradition. The two examinations based on these lists require students to demonstrate a profound grasp of the main concepts, issues, and themes contained in each of the works constituting the reading lists.

The two foundational works examinations are taken the Friday one week prior to the official start of the fall term in the second and third years of study. Students should register for the foundational works exam during registration week of the spring semester.

The reading lists are grouped chronologically: List One covers ancient and medieval authors, and List Two contains modern and contemporary works. Normally, the exam for List One is taken just prior to the student's second year, and the exam for List Two is taken just prior to the third year.

The first examination must be passed before the next may be attempted. If the student fails one of the foundational works examinations, he or she may be granted a second attempt. If the student fails the examination in the second attempt, he or she ceases to be a student in the Ph.D. program.

The two examinations must be passed before taking the qualifying examinations.

Students must answer two out of four questions in three hours. Exam responses are typed on computers provided by the Institute. The grade for the exam is either pass or fail. All responses need to meet the criteria outlined above to obtain a passing grade. Exam results will be communicated to the student in written form within two weeks of the exam.

The foundational works reading lists appear below. Although some of these books appear on course bibliographies, each student is expected to read and prepare on his or her own all the books for the foundational works examinations.

Foundational Works List 1: The Early Works

1. Plato, *The Republic*; *Symposium*; *Meno*
2. Aristotle, *De Anima*; *Nicomachean Ethics*; *Physics* (Books. 2-3); *Metaphysics* (Books 1, 6-9, 12)
3. Plotinus, *Enneads* (5.1; 5.2; 6.8; 6.9)
4. Irenaeus, *Against the Heretics* (Book III, 1-6 and 16-25; Book IV, 1-26 and 37-41; Book V, 1-8)
5. Origen, *First Principles*
6. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*
7. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Five Theological Orations*
8. Gregory of Nyssa, *The Making of Man*, "Letter to Ablabius, on Not Three Gods"

9. Athanasius, *Orations against the Arians* (Oration I); *Treatise on the Incarnation*
10. Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ*
11. Augustine, *De Trinitate* (Books 5-7, 10, 12, 15); *Confessions*; *De Bono Conjugali*; *City of God* (Books 10 and 19)
12. Dionysius, *The Divine Names*
13. Maximus, *Disputation with Pyrrhus*
14. Boethius, *Against Eutyches*
15. Richard of St. Victor, *De Trinitate* (Books III-VI)
16. St. Anselm, *Proslogion*
17. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (I pars, qq. 1-49; I-IIae, qq. 1-21, 90-97, 100, and 106-114; III, qq. 1-15, 40-44)
18. Bonaventure, *Journey of the Mind to God*
19. Scotus, *Philosophical Writings*, translated by Allan Wolter (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1987)
20. Ockham, *Philosophical Writings*, edited by P. Boehner (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1990) (Ch. II [p. 25-32], VII, VIII, IX, and X)
21. Luther, *The Freedom of the Christian*
22. Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion* (Book I, 1-7 and 15-18; Book II, 1-5 and 15; Book III, 1-3 and 7-24; Book IV, 1-2 and 14-19)

Foundational Works List 2: The Later Works

1. Machiavelli, *The Prince*
2. Bacon, *Novum Organum* (Book I)
3. Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Introduction; Parts 1 and 2; Part 3, chs. 32-33, 39, 41)
4. Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*; *Discourse on Method*
5. Locke, *Second Treatise on Civil Government* (Chapters 1-9); *Letter Concerning Toleration*
6. Hume, *An Abstract of Treatise of Human Nature*
7. Kant, Preface to *Critique of Pure Reason*; *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*
8. Hegel, *Lectures on Philosophy of Religion, Vol. III: The Consummate Religion* (The Lectures of 1824 and 1827)
9. Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (Vol. I: Introduction (§§1-31); Vol. II: Second Part of the System of Doctrine: Second Aspect of the Antithesis: Introduction and First Division: Christ (§§ 86-105))
10. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*
11. Newman, *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*
12. Husserl, *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science*
13. Blondel, *L'Action* (1893)
14. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1961)
15. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
16. Bultmann, *New Testament and Mythology*
17. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. II (Ch. 5: The Knowledge of God)
18. Heidegger, *Basic Writings* ("The Question Concerning Technology"), *Pathmarks* ("What is Metaphysics?", "On the Essence of Truth", "Postscript to 'What Is Metaphysics?'", "Introduction to 'What Is Metaphysics?'" and "Letter on Humanism")
19. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*; *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* (Ch. 1-2)

20. De Lubac, "The Mystery of the Supernatural" in *Theology in History* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996); *Catholicism; Scripture in the Tradition*
21. Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, Vol. I; *Christian State of Life* (Part I); *The Laity and the Life of the Counsels* (Part I)
22. Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*
23. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*

Qualifying Examinations

The qualifying examinations consist of both written and oral components. The written component is divided into three sections, and the student's responses in these three sections are treated in the oral component.

The qualifying examinations will take place in the second week of the sixth semester of study, as indicated by the Program Advisor. For serious reasons and with petition to and approval by the Program Advisor, permission may be granted to postpone the qualifying examinations to the first week of April. Qualifying examinations may not be taken until the foundational works examinations and language requirements have been fulfilled.

Students should register for the qualifying examinations during registration week of the fifth semester.

The three written parts will be offered normally on the Monday (section 1), Wednesday (section 2), and Friday (section 3) of the selected week. Each section requires students to answer two of three questions, in four hours, on computers provided by the Institute.

The **written component** of the examination will comprise the following sections.

Section 1: Quarrel Between Ancients and Moderns. What is one to make of the nature and demands of classical and medieval thought relative to the assumptions of modernity, postmodernity, and Anglo-American liberalism? How does the one thing needful as set forth in Greek philosophy ("Athens": reason) stand with respect to the one thing needful as proclaimed by the Bible ("Jerusalem": biblical revelation); and how does each of these stand with respect to modernity in its defining features? What are the defining features of the way of the moderns as distinct from the way of the ancients, medievals, recent Christian thought, and the Church of Vatican II?

These questions will be examined through the following authors:

1. Ancient writers:

Plato, *Republic*; *Meno*; *Symposium*.

Aristotle, *De Anima*; *Nichomachean Ethics*; *Physics* (Books 2-3); *Metaphysics* (Books 1, 6-9, 12)

2. Medieval writers:

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (I pars, qq. 1-49; I-IIae, qq. 1-21, 90-97, 100, and 106-114; III, qq. 1-15, 40-44)

Bonaventure, *Journey of the Mind to God*

Ockham, *Philosophical Writings*, edited by P. Boehner (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1990) (Ch. II [p. 25-32], VII, VIII, IX, and X)

3. Modern writers:

Machiavelli, *The Prince*

Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Introduction; Parts 1 and 2; Part 3, chs. 32-33, 39, 41)

Bacon, *Novum Organum* (Book I)

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy; Discourse on Method*

Locke, *Second Treatise of Civil Government* (Chapters 1-9); *Letter Concerning Toleration*

Hume, "An Abstract of a Treatise of Human Nature"

Kant, Preface to the *Critique of Pure Reason; Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*

4. Recent Christian authors and the Second Vatican Council:

Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, Vol. I; *Christian State of Life* (Part I); *The Laity and the Life of the Counsels* (Part I)

De Lubac, "The Mystery of the Supernatural" in *Theology in History* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996); *Catholicism; Scripture in the Tradition*

Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*

Documents of Vatican II: *Dei verbum, Lumen gentium, Sacrosanctum concilium, Gaudium et spes, Nostra aetate, Dignitatis humanae, Ad gentes, Unitatis redintegratio*

5. American authors:

J. C. Murray, *We Hold These Truths*

---, "The Declaration of Religious Freedom," in *Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal*, ed. John Miller and republished in *Bridging the Sacred and the Secular* (1966).

---, "Declaration on Religious Freedom: Commentary," in *American Participation at the Second Vatican Council*, edited by Vincent A. Yzermans, (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967), 668-76.

J. Rawls, "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited" in *University of Chicago Law Review* Vol. 64.3 (Summer 1997), 765-807.

L. Strauss, *Natural Right and History*

Section 2: Anthropology and Fundamental Theology and Morality. This section requires critical elucidations of the fundamental anthropological-ontological, theological, and moral teaching of Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II and Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI. Students will answer questions regarding such topics as the meaning of person, being as gift, nuptiality, action, and freedom. The following works may be examined in this section:

Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II:

Our God's Brother

The Jeweler's Shop

Radiation of Fatherhood

Person and Act

Love and Responsibility

Gift and Mystery

Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body

The Encyclicals (*Redemptor hominis*; *Dives in misericordia*; *Laborem exercens*; *Slavorum apostoli*; *Dominum et vivificantem*; *Redemptoris mater*; *Sollicitudo rei socialis*; *Redemptorius missio*; *Centesimus annus*; *Veritatis splendor*; *Evangelium vitae*; *Ut unum sint*; *Fides et ratio*; *Ecclesia de eucharistia*)

Mulieris dignitatem

Familiaris consortio

Gratissimam sane

Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI:

Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration

Deus caritas est

Spe salvi

Caritas in veritate

Lumen fidei

Eschatology

Principles of Catholic Theology (Preface; Part I, Ch. 1, Section 1; Part I, Ch. 2, Sections 1&2)

The Spirit of the Liturgy

Truth and Tolerance

A Reason Open to God

Called to Communion

The Unity of the Church

Introduction to Christianity

Sacramentum Caritatis

“The Dignity of the Human Person,” in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Vol. V, edited by Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969).

Section 3: Contemporary Critical Issues. This section requires students to take up currently vexed issues in theology and philosophy pertinent to marriage, family, and the person. Questions will be drawn from such areas as sexual ethics, bioethics, sacramental theology, feminism, gender, and their social, cultural, and political/juridical contexts, requiring students to discuss the current status of an issue in contemporary literature.

Each question in this section will provide a substantial excerpt from a contemporary thinker on one of the topics indicated above. The student will be asked to elucidate the argument, identify its key philosophical/anthropological principles, and evaluate the argument in light of the Catholic tradition.

Following completion of the written components, the student receives a printed copy of his or her exam responses to review in preparation for the oral component of the exam.

The **oral component** of the exam takes place as follows:

The three-member board, whose selection remains confidential until after the written section is concluded, examines the student approximately 10 days after the student has completed his last

written section of the qualifying examination. The oral component of the examination will be approximately two (and not more than two-and-one-half) hours in length.

At the beginning of the oral component, the student will have up to fifteen minutes to offer clarifications or modifications with respect to his or her written responses prior to the commencement of questioning. The student may bring a one-page outline of his planned comments but should not read verbatim from this prepared document.

The board members question the student on each of the three sections of the written component for approximately forty-five minutes. Each board member will be given ten to twelve minutes per section. After the first round of questions, board members may engage in a round of follow-up questions during the section's remaining time. Normally, the panel will begin with the first section and proceed in order to the other two sections. At the discretion of the chair, the foregoing structure of the oral examination may be modified. The chairman of the board is chosen by the Program Advisor and cannot already be a member of the panel. The chairman does not vote concerning the grade but moderates the board's discussion following the examination.

Grading

Each written section as well as the oral component will be graded on a pass-fail basis, although for an exceptional examination a student may be awarded a "Pass with Distinction." If the student fails any written question or part of the oral component, the student will be deemed to have failed the entire qualifying examination. The examining board will privately discuss the grading directly following the conclusion of the oral component. If the student fails the qualifying examination, he or she has a chance to retake the entire examination during the first week of April. (In the case of a first attempt in April, the retake will be offered the first week of September.) If the student does not pass this retake, he or she ceases to be a student in the Ph.D. program.

The results of the qualifying examination will be communicated to the student in written form within a week of the oral exam.

Once a student has received a grade of "pass" for all qualifying examinations, he or she is considered a "candidate" for the degree and may propose and defend the dissertation prospectus.

Dissertation Prospectus

The dissertation prospectus is prepared under the guidance of the dissertation director, who is normally selected by registration week of the fifth semester, with the advice and consent of the Program Advisor. The key elements of the dissertation prospectus are the research and articulation of the dissertation's argument and the collegial process of guidance by the dissertation director and the first and second readers of the dissertation.

Excluding the bibliography, the prospectus should contain c. 3000 words.

It should consist of all the following parts:

1. Proposed Dissertation Title

- The title can consist of a main title and subtitle and should indicate the thesis of the dissertation in some form.
2. Introduction to the Thesis
 - The introduction to the thesis should be brief (1-2 paragraphs) and should situate the topic of the thesis in the general current cultural and academic context: Why is the dissertation needed? What problem does it address, in general terms? The Introduction prepares the general reader to understand the relevance of the dissertation and motivates a further engagement.
 3. Thesis Statement
 - In a paragraph or less, state the argument of the dissertation in its essence. What proposition will you be arguing?
 4. *Status Quaestionis*
 - To show the originality of the dissertation's contribution, it is necessary to outline the historical and theological context of the topic and the thesis. Who are the major contributors and what solutions and theses have they proposed? What are the questions at stake in the debate and how does the thesis of the dissertation aim to answer them in a new and helpful fashion?
 5. Methodology
 - Give an account of the sources you plan to base your thesis on, describe the research methods you use to engage the sources, and make transparent the theological perspective of the dissertation's engagement with the topic.
 6. Description of Chapters
 - Lay out the development of the dissertation's argument through each of the planned chapters, and why each chapter is a necessary step in the whole argument.
 7. Table of Contents
 - Provide a proposed table of contents, with chapter names and major sub-headings.
 8. Bibliography
 - The bibliography should include significant primary and secondary sources that will be consulted and should list the two kinds of sources separately, both in alphabetical order.

Each of the more substantive sections [4-8] should begin on a fresh page in the document. Students should request and refer to the Institute's style guide on how to write a dissertation. A sample prospectus may also be requested; both documents are available in Room 313.

Dissertation Prospectus Evaluation

The student must have taken and passed the qualifying examinations before the prospectus may be submitted for formal evaluation.

Once the dissertation director deems the prospectus acceptable, it is circulated among the entire faculty. The prospectus may be submitted by April 1 of the sixth semester, if possible, and no later than November 1 of the seventh semester. Within two weeks of the reception of the prospectus, the faculty must submit any comments, objections, or questions regarding the thesis to the director and Program Advisor. Once the two-week period has elapsed, all faculty who have not submitted comments, objections, or questions will be deemed to have approved the prospectus.

After this review, the student may meet with his or her board, comprised of the director and two readers, for the evaluation of the prospectus. The prospectus evaluation is an opportunity for the candidate to present his or her thesis, its importance and historical or scholarly context, and the intended methodological approach to his or her panel members. It also gives the panelists an opportunity to pose questions, offer comments or criticisms, and suggest or require changes, whether large or small, to the prospectus and intended dissertation.

The prospectus is deemed to be finally approved when it has been signed by the dissertation director, the first and second readers, and the Program Advisor. The prospectus, with original signatures, is held in the student's permanent file.

The board may make the following dispositions of the prospectus as a result of the evaluation meeting: "pass," "pass with minor modifications," "revise and resubmit," or "fail." If the prospectus is deemed "passed," the panel members (the director and the two readers) must sign the approval form and deliver it to the Program Advisor for his signature and placement in the student's permanent file. If the prospectus is deemed "passed with minor modifications," the panel members must withhold their signatures until they are satisfied that the modifications have been made. The student must make the necessary modifications with the oversight of the director and gain the panel's signatures prior to mid-term of the following semester. A new evaluation meeting is not necessary. If the student is requested to "revise and resubmit," the panelists must withhold their signatures. Once the necessary, more substantial modifications have been made with the oversight of the director, the student must meet with his or her board for the re-evaluation of the prospectus by mid-term of the following semester. If the prospectus is deemed "failed," the student must submit a new prospectus and successfully pass the evaluation by the last day of the following semester. If the student fails to meet any of these conditions or deadlines, he or she must petition the Dean to continue in the program.

Once the prospectus approval page has been signed by the director, readers, and Program Advisor, and deposited in the student's permanent file, the student may begin to write his or her dissertation.

Faculty availability is normally limited during the summer months. Hence, if a student is unable to complete the prospectus by April 1, it will be helpful to develop, under the guidance of the dissertation director, a detailed research and drafting plan by the end of the sixth semester. In this way, the student will be able to work over the summer with limited guidance.

If a student changes his or her dissertation topic, the new topic must be approved by the dissertation director, the Program Advisor, and the Dean. If the dissertation director or any of the readers is to be changed, the approval of the Dean is required.

Dissertation

The Ph.D. degree is awarded after the successful completion of the doctoral dissertation and a defense of the dissertation before the dissertation board. The dissertation should not exceed 300 pages (bibliography excluded). On an exceptional basis, the Program Advisor may grant permission for a dissertation to exceed 300 pages. To receive such an exception, the candidate,

with the concurrence of his or her director and other panel members, must demonstrate that the additional length is necessary, given the nature of the dissertation.

The dissertation should demonstrate maturity of theological judgment based on advanced graduate study. It should give evidence of a capacity for research and reflection commensurate with advanced study, an ability to perform independent intellectual work, and a profound comprehension of the candidate's chosen field of study. The dissertation should be of sufficient quality to constitute a genuine contribution to that field of study.

On or before the deadline for submission noted in the academic calendar, the student must submit to the Program Advisor *six* copies of the completed dissertation, accompanied by six copies of an abstract of 350 words. The dissertation copies must be bound with a black spiral binding, a black vinyl back cover, and a clear plastic front cover. The text of the dissertation may be printed double-sided, and the text should be double-spaced in 12-point New Times Roman font, left-margin-justified. The margins should be 1.25" at the right and left of the page and 1" at the top and bottom of the page. The dissertation should follow the Chicago Manual of Style. A sample title page and table of contents may be requested from the Administrative Assistant.

The student must receive approval from his or her dissertation director before the dissertation is submitted for defense. Once the dissertation has been submitted, the Program Advisor, in consultation with the dissertation director, may select an external reader who is not a member of the faculty to participate at the defense.

The Administrative Assistant distributes the copies of the dissertation to the dissertation director and the other dissertation board members.

The dissertation may not be submitted to the board members until the director has given approval. In consultation with the director, other board members may disqualify the dissertation for defense by submitting their written objections within four weeks of the dissertation's submission. If no objection is registered, the defense date will be confirmed.

At least eight weeks must elapse between the submission of the dissertation and the defense; the summer months and official holidays will not be counted as part of the required eight weeks. The fall and spring deadlines for submission of dissertations will be listed in the academic calendar for each year, and all candidates will be strictly bound by those dates.

Defense of the Dissertation

After acceptance of the dissertation by the director and readers, the student must defend the dissertation in a public defense of at least two hours. The student will begin with a fifteen-minute presentation of the dissertation, which will be followed by a period of questions from each member of the dissertation board. In the opening presentation, the student may speak from notes of no more than one page but should not read from a prepared text.

At the end of the defense, the oral defense and the dissertation are graded separately. A vote is taken in secret for each component and is supervised by the chairman of the examination. The possible grades for the dissertation are "fail," "pass," "pass with revisions," and, in rare instances

and only for clearly superior work, “pass with distinction.” The candidate must receive a “pass” for both the dissertation and the defense to receive the Ph.D. degree. A majority of the board must approve in order for the dissertation to receive a grade of “pass” or “pass with revisions.” A “pass with distinction” will be given for the dissertation only upon a unanimous decision of the board for both the written dissertation itself *and* its oral defense.

A student may be awarded the Ph.D. degree “with distinction” only if the grade “pass with distinction” is earned for both the qualifying examinations and the dissertation, and if the student’s grade-point average is 3.9 or above.

If a candidate fails the defense, he or she must obtain permission from the Dean to retake the examination. A candidate will not be permitted to submit revisions to the text or repeat the defense until at least one semester, or an equivalent period of time, has elapsed from the date of the failure. If the student fails a second time, he or she ceases to be a candidate for the Ph.D. degree.

Dissertation Publication

Following successful defense of the dissertation and any required revisions, Ph.D. graduates have the opportunity to submit their dissertations for publication by UMI ProQuest. UMI ProQuest is a national dissertation archive that allows Ph.D. dissertations to be accessible, via abstract or full text, to the scholarly community. Submission for publication may be completed through the Institute’s private institutional online portal. Instructions for the submission process will be distributed upon request to the Administrative Assistant. Depending on the author’s selection of services from UMI ProQuest, the publication process may be free or may require the payment of a nominal fee. The student should consult with his or her dissertation director and the Program Advisor regarding whether to publish via ProQuest.

Advising and Dissertation Direction

The Program Advisor orients the student to the degree program, oversees the degree requirements, assists the student in selecting the dissertation director, and gives final approval to course selection.

In the Fall 2025 semester, the Institute will implement a new initiative to help Ph.D. students prior to candidacy. Each student will be assigned a Personal Advisor from among the faculty, who will serve as his or her primary advisor throughout pre-candidacy studies. Notice of individual assignments is given to students at the beginning of their doctoral studies. The Personal Advisor will meet with each advisee at least once per semester to discuss his or her progress. The Personal Advisors will help guide students through the program and its various requirements. In addition, Personal Advisors will help students refine their research interests, assist with other questions and concerns as they arise, and generally serve as mentors. The Personal Advisor, in consultation with the Program Advisor, may advise on course selection and will approve student requests for cross-registered courses or directed readings.

The Personal Advisor does not replace the Program Advisor, who will continue to oversee the program and its administration. Once students begin work on their dissertation prospectuses, the Dissertation Director, who is normally selected by registration of the fifth semester, will become the students’ primary advisor and mentor.

Mentoring Program

Ph.D. students are required to participate in the Mentoring Program. The purpose of the program is to introduce students to the doctoral-level research and writing in general, the strategies for writing a dissertation in particular, the conception and teaching of a course, and the process of applying for academic jobs and presenting one's work at conferences. In general, the Mentoring Program familiarizes students with the requirements needed for a successful career in academic theology.

The Program consists of four 90-minute workshops which treat the following topics:

1. Research/Writing.
2. Writing a Dissertation.
3. Pedagogy.
4. Job Application/Conference Presentations.

The first workshop on Research/Writing is held at the beginning of every fall semester, whereas the other three workshops are held on a rotating basis during the spring semester. The whole Mentoring Program is completed in a three-year cycle.

Review of Academic Progress

The Ph.D. Program Advisor conducts an interview with each doctoral student at the end of his or her first and third years of study to review the student's academic progress and to receive comments from the student regarding his or her progress and concerning the program itself. At this time, the Program Advisor communicates to the student the results of the periodic evaluation of his or her progress by the faculty members of the faculty academic committee.

After successful completion of the dissertation defense, each student will meet with the Ph.D. Program Advisor for an exit review of the program. A written review of the program is also requested at this time.

Residency and Timeline

The Ph.D. program requires at least six semesters of full-time study in residence, plus at least two years of dissertation writing.

A timeline of the major milestones of the program is provided on page 17 of this handbook. Regular progress through these milestones is assumed. Unsatisfactory written work, failure to complete program requirements on a timely basis, or failure to comply with other guidelines or to make adequate progress in the degree program may result in appropriate action up to and including dismissal from the program. An appeal of this decision may be directed to the Dean, whose decision will be final in all cases.

In particular, failure to complete the language requirements in a timely manner can result in serious delays in completing the qualifying exams and the prospectus. If a student reaches the end of the eighth semester in the program without completing the qualifying exams and the prospectus, he or she must submit a formal appeal to the Dean to remain in the Ph.D. program. The appeal should include a specific plan and timeline for completing the delayed program elements. The decision of the Dean regarding this appeal is final, and if the appeal is accepted, the timeline for completion of the delayed elements must be followed entirely to remain in the program.

The completed dissertation must be defended within five years of achieving candidacy for the degree. If a student is unable to defend the dissertation within this period, the student may petition the Program Advisor for a one-year extension, which will be granted if the student has demonstrated progress toward completion.

If a student fails to defend the dissertation by the five-year deadline or the extended deadline (if applicable), he or she ceases to be a candidate for the Ph.D. degree.

Assistantships

Ph.D. students will be assigned research or teaching assistantships during the fourth and fifth years of study, as available. The research assistantships may entail ten to fifteen hours of work per week assisting a designated professor. Teaching assistantships may involve teaching a full-semester course offered through the Institute's Continuing Education Program. During registration week of the sixth semester, students may submit a request to work with a specific professor; final assignments will be made by the Dean and announced by the end of that semester. Acceptance of assistantships is required for continued receipt of any scholarships or stipends.

Timeline for Completion of Ph.D. Degree

Year 1

First Semester

- Meet with Dean.
- Meet with Program Advisor.
- Complete one language exam.

Second Semester

- By April exam dates, complete a second language exam.
- In late April/early May, meet with Program Advisor for first-year review.

Year 2

Third Semester

- One week before Orientation, take first foundational works exam.

Fourth Semester

- By April exam dates, complete remaining language exams.

Year 3

Fifth Semester

- One week before Orientation, take second foundational works exam.
- By first week of November, select thesis director in consultation with the Program Advisor.

Sixth Semester

- In second week of semester, take qualifying exams.
- If possible, complete dissertation prospectus by April 1 and submit to director for review by faculty and evaluation.
- In late April/early May, meet with Program Advisor for third-year review.

Year 4

- No later than November 1, complete dissertation prospectus and submit to director for review by faculty and evaluation.
- Work in research or teaching assistantship, as assigned.

Year 5

- Work in research or teaching assistantship, as assigned.
- Submit and defend dissertation.
- Meet with Program Advisor for exit review.