



**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
HANDBOOK**

Doctoral Office

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*This manual is a digest of current policies and procedures for the Doctor of Philosophy program at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. The Doctoral Studies Committee has established the policies and procedures for this program. They are subject to change at any time. For answers to questions not directly addressed in this manual, please contact the Doctoral Studies Office (816-414-3755; email [docstudies@mbts.edu](mailto:docstudies@mbts.edu)), which is located in the Koehn-Meyers Center for World Evangelism (room 117).*

# Table of Contents

## Welcome

### 1. Admission and Student Status

- 1.1. Introduction
  - 1.1.1. Southern Baptist Convention Seminaries Purpose Statement
  - 1.1.2. MBTS Mission Statement
- 1.2. Purpose and Objectives of the PhD Program
  - 1.2.1. Purpose
  - 1.2.2. Doctoral Program Objectives
  - 1.2.3. PhD Program Objectives
- 1.3. Admission
  - 1.3.1. Requirements for Admission
  - 1.3.2. Admission Procedures for US Citizens
  - 1.3.3. Admission Procedures for International Students
  - 1.3.4. Admission Notification
    - 1.3.4.1. Unconditional Admission
    - 1.3.4.2. Provisional Admission
    - 1.3.4.3. Non-Degree Seeking Admission
  - 1.3.5. Denial of Admission
- 1.4. Tuition and Financial Aid
  - 1.4.1. Tuition and Fees
  - 1.4.2. Financial Aid
- 1.5. Enrollment
  - 1.5.1. Matriculation
  - 1.5.2. Enrollment Policies and Procedures
  - 1.5.3. Interrupted Status
  - 1.5.4. Inactive Status
  - 1.5.5. Reactivation Process
  - 1.5.6. Academic Probation
  - 1.5.7. Transfer of Credits
  - 1.5.8. Withdrawal
    - 1.5.8.1. Withdrawal from the PhD Program
    - 1.5.8.2. Withdrawal from a Seminar
  - 1.5.9. Termination
- 1.6. Student Portal, LMS, Email, and Internet
  - 1.6.1. Student Portal and LMS Accounts
  - 1.6.2. Student Email Account
  - 1.6.3. Student/Campus Wireless Internet Access (Wi-Fi)
- 1.7. Doctoral Study Carrel Policy
- 1.8. Candidacy
- 1.9. Fellows and Adjunct Instructors

### 2. Program Prior to Dissertation

- 2.1. Grading and Student Records
  - 2.1.1. Grade Scale

- 2.1.2. Doctoral Studies Unofficial Audit
- 2.2. Seminar Structure
- 2.3. Biblical Studies Emphases
- 2.4. Student Advisement
- 2.5. Language Requirements
- 2.6. PhD Seminar Requirements
  - 2.6.1. Core Seminars
  - 2.6.2. PhD Emphasis Seminars
    - 2.6.2.1. Biblical Studies (OT & NT)
    - 2.6.2.2. Ethics
    - 2.6.2.3. Ministry
    - 2.6.2.4. Missiology
    - 2.6.2.5. Preaching
    - 2.6.2.6. Theology
    - 2.6.2.7. Historical Theology
    - 2.6.2.8. New Testament
    - 2.6.2.9. Old Testament
    - 2.6.2.10. Apologetics
- 2.7. Sequence of Study
- 2.8. Directed Study and Audits
  - 2.8.1. Directed Study
  - 2.8.2. Auditing Research Doctoral Seminars
- 2.9. Comprehensive Examination
  - 2.9.1. Overview and Purpose
  - 2.9.2. Comprehensive Examination Goals and Objectives
  - 2.9.3. Supervision
  - 2.9.4. Duration
  - 2.9.5. Evaluation
- 2.10. Course Rotation

### **3. Dissertation Research and Writing**

- 3.1. Overview
- 3.2. Comprehensive Examination and Dissertation Proposal
  - 3.2.1. Development and Submission of the Proposal
  - 3.2.2. Submission of the PhD Dissertation Proposal
  - 3.2.3. Style of the Proposal
  - 3.2.4. Modifications to Proposed Course of Research
- 3.3. Appointment of the Dissertation Committee
- 3.4. Satisfactory Academic Progress
- 3.5. External Readers
- 3.6. Style of the Dissertation
- 3.7. Length of the Dissertation
- 3.8. Writing the Dissertation
- 3.9. Submission of the Dissertation Draft

#### **4. Dissertation Defense**

- 4.1 Overview
- 4.2. Participants
- 4.3. Format
- 4.4. Duration
- 4.5. Evaluation and Response
- 4.6. Submitting the Final Copies of the Dissertation
- 4.7. Copyright and Database Submission
  - 4.7.1. Dissertation Copyright
  - 4.7.2. Database Submission

#### **5. Forms**

- 5.1. Proposal Approval Sheet
- 5.2. Sample Proposal Title Page
- 5.3. Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation Standards
- 5.4. Doctor of Philosophy Oral Defense Standards
- 5.5. External Reader Request Form
- 5.6. External Reader Dissertation Defense Grade Sheet

Appendix: A Statement of Integrity in Seminary Studies

## Welcome!

The Doctor of Philosophy in Biblical Studies degree offered through Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS) is designed to prepare students to serve the church as teachers, pastors, and leaders on the highest academic, professional, and spiritual level. It equips them for superior research, writing, and ministry skill, resulting in a substantial contribution to these areas, with emphasis upon theological knowledge. As per the vision of Midwestern, holders of this degree will be competent and dedicated ministry leaders who are faithful to the teachings of Scripture in striving to strengthen the church and its mission.

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is recognized by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools as a research theological degree. Accordingly, this degree is intended primarily to equip persons for vocations of teaching and research in theological schools, colleges, and universities, as well as for the scholarly enhancement of ministerial practice. In this sense, the PhD differs from a professional theological degree (e.g., DMin, DEdMin, or DCoun), given the former's emphasis on knowledge acquisition, as opposed to practical change, which is the latter's essential focus.<sup>1</sup>

The nature of Holy Scripture demands that theological inquiry be rooted in biblical exegesis. Faithful interpretation of the Bible sets the agenda for theology, while the latter directs the outcomes effective ministry. Following this logic, Midwestern Seminary offers a PhD in Biblical Studies, under which several emphases are available. Each emphasis is designed either to interpret Scripture itself or to explore the wider theoretical implications of established exegetical results.

Noteworthy academic and/or ministerial achievement is necessary for admission into the doctoral studies programs at Midwestern. Thus, admission is offered only to students who have demonstrated significant academic capability in a Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, or an equivalent degree program, coupled with exceptional ministry skill, to be determined by the precise nature of the student's anticipated emphasis.

This handbook offers an overall sketch of the PhD program with sufficient detail to answer the majority of questions raised as each stage of the program, from admission to the thesis defense; however, as it does not anticipate every question or concern, the student is invited to seek particular help from the Doctoral Studies Office as needed. A Doctoral Program e-Newsletter will also be sent from time to time with important announcements. Finally, the MBTS website answers many FAQs and offers a regularly updated seminar calendar for planning purposes.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Conniry, Jr. "Reducing the Identity Crisis in Doctor of Ministry Education." *Theological Education*, 40, no. 1 (2004): 138.

On a personal level, from the Doctoral Studies Office to you, we say: keep the lines of communication open! Make us aware of changes in your life which may affect you personally and the progress of your study. We pray for you and your family, and we consider it a privilege to assist you on your doctoral journey.

## **1. Admission and Student Status**

### **1.1. Introduction**

In connection with the school's long history of providing accredited studies on the professional doctoral level, Midwestern offers a research doctorate (PhD) in Biblical Studies with available emphases in Old Testament, New Testament, Preaching, Theology, Historical Theology, Ethics, Apologetics, Ministry, and Missiology.

#### 1.1.1. Southern Baptist Convention Seminaries Purpose Statement

Southern Baptist theological seminaries exist to prepare God-called men and women for vocational service in Baptist churches and in other Christian ministries throughout the world through programs of spiritual development, theological studies, and practical preparation in ministry.

#### 1.1.2. MBTS Mission Statement

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary serves the church by biblically educating God-called men and women to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

### **1.2. Purpose and Objectives of the PhD Program**

#### 1.2.1. Purpose

The PhD is intended primarily (a) to equip persons for vocations of teaching and research in theological schools, colleges, and universities, and (b) to enhance the practice of ministry through advanced, biblically defined scholarship.

#### 1.2.2. Doctoral Program Objectives:

1. Students will master a discernible field of study.
2. Students will critically evaluate a significant problem, issue or challenge related to their chosen field of study.
3. Students will evaluate a problem, issue or challenge within the current and previous research in their chosen field of study.
4. Students will develop and defend a written dissertation in their chosen field of study.

#### 1.2.3. PhD Program Objectives:

1. Students will master a discernible field of study within their chosen theological discipline.
2. Students will understand and demonstrate research methodologies and procedures appropriate to their chosen field of study.
3. Students will demonstrate theological inquiry and hermeneutical expertise through writing and teaching within their chosen field of study.
4. Students will exercise the liberty to develop and defend a research dissertation.

### **1.3. Admission**

#### **1.3.1. Requirements for Admission**

Applicants seeking admission to the PhD program at MBTS must meet the general criteria for admission to the school as well as the requirements listed below.

1. Applicants must hold an earned 52+ hour master's degree or equivalent from an accredited institution recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation ([www.chea.org](http://www.chea.org)).
2. Applicants must have a 3.0 grade point average or above on a 4.0 scale for all graduate level studies
3. Applicants must demonstrate a working knowledge of Greek, Hebrew, and one modern research language, normally satisfied prior to beginning doctoral studies (see below 2.4 Language Requirements). The degree of competence required in Greek and/or Hebrew is determined by the student's anticipated area of research emphasis.

#### **1.3.2. Admission Procedures for US Citizens**

United States citizens seeking admission to the PhD program must:

1. Submit an online application in the MBTS website ([www.mbts.edu](http://www.mbts.edu); click "Apply Now")
2. Request and submit to the Doctoral Studies Office official transcripts from all academic institutions previously attended
3. Provide (a) two academic references and (b) one personal and/or professional reference.
4. Submit an essay of approximately ten (double-spaced) pages which (a) captures the student's understanding of salvation and Christian ministry, (b) identifies the student's personal and professional goals, and (c) explains how research doctoral study would serve the ends identified in part (b) above. This essay is to manifest superior ability in English grammar, style, and composition, as it is used by the Doctoral Admissions Committee as partial evidence of the student's readiness for doctoral studies.
5. Provide a completed *Church Endorsement Form* or letter of endorsement from your governing ministry body.

### 1.3.3. Admission Procedures for International Students

1. Complete items 1-5 specified above for US citizens
2. Submit TOFEL scores to the Doctoral Studies Committee (The minimum score for admission is 550 on the paper test. For the internet-based test [iBT] a minimum total score of 80 is required with a minimum of 20 on each of the Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing sub-sections)
3. Submit a completed International Student Certification of Finances form
4. Provide evidence of full compliance with all legal issues set forth in US law as applicable to degree-granting institutions

### 1.3.4. Admission Notification

The Doctoral Studies Committee may grant admission to the PhD degree under three different categories: unconditional, provisional, and non-degree seeking. Upon admission, the student will be enrolled in the DR 00000 Doctoral Orientation course (0 hrs) that includes careful study of essential PhD documents and other requirements. Billing for the program will start at this time, unless (a) the student makes prior arrangements in writing with the Doctoral Studies office and (b) such arrangements have been approved by the Doctoral Studies Committee. At no time will a student be allowed to postpone enrollment more than 12 months.

#### 1.3.4.1. Unconditional Admission

Unconditional admission is granted when the applicant meets all requirements set forth in the catalog.

#### 1.3.4.2. Provisional Admission

A student who lacks one or more requirements needed for unconditional admission may be admitted with provisional status, which does not imply a negative evaluation of the student or the student's work. However, a student who is admitted on provisional status will normally be required to satisfy any deficiencies within the first year of study and will be evaluated in the process of the program by the Doctoral Studies Committee to assure that he or she is progressing well. Depending on the circumstances, applicants may be limited in moving through the degree program until deficiencies are resolved.

A student admitted to the PhD program with provisional status must earn a 3.0 GPA, and no grade below a B-, in the first two seminars taken. Students failing to meet this requirement are placed on academic probation for the following semester. Students lacking the required level of competency in Greek or Hebrew may be admitted provisionally, with the understanding that such deficiency will be remedied as soon as possible—preferably by the end of the first year of PhD studies. Students admitted provisionally may be

restricted as to the type and extent of course work allowed, until such deficiencies are resolved.

An international student admitted to the program with a low TOEFL score may also be admitted with provisional status. A minimum TOEFL score of 550 on the written version, 213 on the computer version, or 80 on the online version is required. However, an international student admitted to the PhD program with a low TOEFL score must retake the TOEFL test and pass with an acceptable score by the end of their first full semester of study. Failure to successfully do so will place the student on probationary status the following semester. International students are expected to have a command of spoken English sufficient to contribute productively to colloquium and seminar discussions. International students are also expected to be able to write clear, Standard English.

#### 1.3.4.3. Non-Degree Seeking

Qualified individuals may apply as Non-Degree Seeking (NDS) students in the PhD program. Admission as a NDS student must be approved by the Doctoral Studies Committee. Completion of a NDS student application, accompanied by a non-refundable application fee, will be required. With formal approval of the PhD Director, NDS students may enroll in one research doctoral seminar per semester, with space-available priority given to doctoral students who have been fully admitted. NDS students may not complete more than 12 hours of seminars without obtaining approval from the Doctoral Studies Committee prior to taking each additional seminar. Students seeking credit for seminars taken on a NDS basis will pay per credit-hour. Students desiring to receive credit for any seminar must complete all of its requirements as outlined in the syllabus.

Completion of courses as a NDS student does not guarantee admission into the research doctoral program, nor does success in this regard obviate standard admissions requirements. Seminars taken for credit on an NDS basis may be applied toward the PhD degree program, provided that each seminar completed satisfies specific program requirements. The doctoral program fee at the time of final admission will be pro-rated, according to a formula set by the Doctoral Studies Office.

#### 1.3.5. Denial of Admission

Applicants who are denied admission, and who wish to reapply, must wait at least one year before doing so. All requirements not previously met must be satisfied before admission is possible.

### **1.4. Tuition and Financial Aid**

#### 1.4.1. Tuition and Fees

Current tuition prices and fee schedules may be viewed on the institution's website at [www.mbts.edu](http://www.mbts.edu). Students changing denominational status from SBC to non-SBC, or vice versa, will be subject to the relevant increase or discount effective the semester following

the change. Spouses enrolled in classes in the College or Seminary may qualify for a tuition reduction. Please contact the Doctoral Studies Office for details.

#### 1.4.2. Financial Aid

The primary purpose of the financial aid program at Midwestern is to assist students who demonstrate financial need. PhD students with financial needs are encouraged to visit with the Financial Aid Coordinator in the Student Development Office in order to determine what financial options may be available. Midwestern will make a limited, one-time financial match for any student whose church contributes to his or her education, subject to restrictions and regulations available from the Business Office. To receive these matching funds, the church must send a letter, to the attention of the Business Office, that (a) identifies the student to receive the award and (b) encloses a check payable to MBTS (with the student name in the memo line). Further questions regarding scholarships should be directed to the Financial Aid Office.

### **1.5. Enrollment**

#### 1.5.1. Matriculation

After admission to the program, students must enroll in their first seminar within one year. A student who has registered for a seminar or colloquium is considered to have matriculated. Once matriculated, the student is expected to enroll for a seminar each semester until his or her dissertation has been submitted and successfully defended. The Doctor of Philosophy degree is a 52 hour program usually requiring four years (eight semesters) or more of academic study.

Students must maintain enrollment until all degree requirements are satisfied. Failure to maintain enrollment as such, or to apply for Interrupted Status, is cause for probationary status or dismissal from the program. All students, regardless of status, must maintain contact with the Doctoral Office in the form of a letter or email confirming their current status and contact information. The Doctoral Studies Committee will consider for mandatory withdrawal any student who fails to communicate responsibly with the Doctoral Studies Office. Minimum contact is considered to be once a semester. Students enrolled in DR 40980 Dissertation – Ongoing Research will be expected to file a Research Phase Project Report each semester (due June 15 and December 15).

#### 1.5.2. Enrollment Policies and Procedures

To enroll in a seminar, the student must register by email, fax or letter prior to the published enrollment deadline. Phone enrollment, or other forms of causal arrangement, will not be accepted. Registration after the first scheduled day of a seminar (the class start date for pre-seminar work, not the first day of the on-campus week), and during the next thirteen days following the start date, will occasion a late-registration fee. Registration on the fifteenth day following the start-date, or at any later time, will not be permitted.

### 1.5.3. Interrupted Status

All PhD students must successfully complete at least two courses/seminars per academic year. If a student cannot maintain this standard, written notification including an explanation must be submitted to the Doctoral Studies Committee. Students not meeting this standard will be considered for Interrupted Status (first year) or Inactive Status (subsequent times) only for reasons of health, relocation, IMB/Missionary service or military service.

The maximum limit for interrupted status is one year. A per-semester fee will be charged for each semester spent on interrupted status. Requests for interrupted status must be made in advance of each term. Final dates that a student can request interrupted status during a semester are November 1 (for fall term) and May 1 (for spring term). Requests submitted after these deadlines will occasion additional fees. Formal PhD requirements may not be satisfied while the student is on interrupted status. Once a student is granted interrupted status, it is assumed that the student will return the following semester. It is the student's responsibility to request additional semesters of interrupted status. Failure to maintain enrollment when the student has not been approved for interrupted status or inactive status is interpreted as withdrawal from the program.

### 1.5.4. Inactive Status

Inactive status may be granted each year for up to three years. The fees for inactive status match that of interrupted status. Formal PhD requirements may not be completed while the student is on inactive status. Time spent on interrupted or inactive status does not count toward the 8 years (16 semesters) maximum for the PhD program. Failure to maintain enrollment when the student has not been approved for interrupted status or inactive status is interpreted as withdrawal from the program. A student may not be on interrupted status and serve as a Fellow or Adjunct Instructor.

### 1.5.5. Reactivation Process

A student returns from interrupted status or inactive status by completing the following reactivation process.

1. Submit a formal letter to the Doctoral Studies Committee explaining how circumstances of the student have changed so that reactivation is possible
2. Pay all fees
3. Be willing to meet with the Doctoral Studies Committee for an interview if requested
4. Receive approval from the Doctoral Studies Committee

All students, regardless of status, must remain in regular contact with the Doctoral Studies Office. This contact may be established by (a) matriculating in a seminar or (b) submitting a letter or email confirming the student's current status and mailing address. The Doctoral Studies Committee will consider students who fail to maintain contact by such means as having withdrawn from the program.

#### 1.5.6. Academic Probation

Students are placed on academic probation immediately following a semester in which they earn a B- or below on a course. Students receiving any grade below a B- on a doctoral course will not receive credit for that course and must retake it. A student's academic performance during a time of probation must be strong. Normally, academic probation will not extend beyond one semester. The PhD Director may request an interview with students placed on probation and seek evaluative input from other faculty members. Based on these findings submitted to the Doctoral Studies Committee, the latter will determine whether probationary status should be lifted and if the student should be allowed to continue in the program. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, a second grade of B- or below in the following semester will normally result in termination of the student from the program. If the student receives two failing grades (B- or lower) in one semester, the student's program may be terminated at the conclusion of that semester.

#### 1.5.7. Transfer of Credits

Students may transfer doctoral level colloquia or seminars from other accredited institutions. Please note that transferring hours from another doctoral program needs to occur within six months of initial application, preferably before the first seminar. Requests for transfer must be submitted in writing to the PhD Director, and official transcripts from the accredited institution must be sent to the Doctoral Studies Office. All requests for transfer of credit will be evaluated individually by the PhD Director and confirmed by the Doctoral Studies Committee.

Midwestern transfers a limited number of credit hours for work taken at other accredited institutions. The following Association of Theological Schools (ATS) regulations apply:

- (1) Up to one half of the credits required for the student's degree program at Midwestern may be granted on the basis of transfer credits, and no more than one half of the credits required for the degree program at the transfer school may be transferred.
- (2) Courses transferred must be equivalent in content and requirements to courses in the Midwestern catalog.
- (3) Only courses used to meet Midwestern degree requirements will be transferred and recorded on the student's permanent record/transcript.
- (4) Only courses in which the student has received a grade of B or higher will transfer. The registrar and Doctoral Studies Committee will consider those requests involving transfer of credit from institutions accredited by other than ATS on a case-by-case basis.

## 1.5.8. Withdrawal

### 1.5.8.1. Withdrawal from the PhD Program

If a student must withdraw from the program, a letter stating intent to withdraw is to be submitted to the PhD Director or the doctoral studies office. The letter of intent to withdraw is essential if a student is to be given a withdrawal “without prejudice.” Students should seek counsel from the PhD Director and the Doctoral Studies Committee before submitting intent to withdraw letter. Students who withdraw “without prejudice” may appeal to the PhD Director and the Doctoral Studies Committee at a later date for consideration for re-instatement. Failure to maintain registration when the student has not been approved for interrupted or inactive status is interpreted as withdrawal from the program.

### 1.5.8.2. Withdrawal from a Seminar

Students seeking to withdraw from a seminar (e.g., following a decision to change emphasis) must request to do so by email or letter submitted to the Doctoral Office. Requests submitted at least 60 days before the start-date of the seminar may be approved without additional charges. Requests submitted less than 60 days prior to the start-date, but before the second day of on-campus instruction, will occasion additional charges, according to a fee schedule established by the Business Office. Withdrawal after the first day of on-campus instruction will not be permitted. Students who withdraw from two seminars will be placed on academic probation. Withdrawal from three seminars will result in their being dropped from the program. Fees will be automatically billed to the student’s Business Office account upon notification of withdrawal from a seminar.

## 1.5.9. Termination

Common reasons for termination from the PhD program would include:

- Failing to notify the Doctoral Studies Committee of any significant change in status or location
- Failing to meet financial obligations to the Seminary
- Maintaining less than a 3.0 GPA in doctoral studies
- Earning less than a B in any two seminars
- Failing to complete at least two seminars per academic year
- Falling two or more seminars behind the pace of satisfactory progress
- Failing to apply for reactivation at the end of interrupted or inactive status
- Failing any seminar (grade below B-)
- Conduct unbecoming of a minister of the Gospel
- Withdrawing from three seminars once enrolled
- Plagiarism or other forms of academic fraud

## 1.6. Student Portal, LMS, Email, and Internet

### 1.6.1. Student Portal and Learning Management System (LMS)

PhD students will be issued an ID for access to their MBTS Student Portal and to the institution's present learning management system (LMS). The new login ID will be formatted as follows: the first initial of the student's first name, last name, and the last five (5) digits of the student ID number (found on the back of a student ID). For example, student John Doe with a student ID of 1001 602 15394 would have a login ID of jdoe15394.

Student will use their login ID to access their accounts on the Student Portal ([https://portal.mbts.edu/student\\_portal](https://portal.mbts.edu/student_portal)) and also provide access to the LMS. The student's password for the Student Portal account will be the same for the account in the LMS.

Upon enrollment in their first course, students will be granted access to the student portal. Students must pay close attention in order to login to the correct semester. After login, follow the link at the lower left of the menu titled "My Courses." The course syllabus and other resources will be located under "Course Documents" as posted by the professor. Please note that the system defaults to the current term, so to find a January course, the viewer will need to change the parameters to the spring term of the correct year. Questions about the student portal may be directed to the MBTS IT department at 816-414-3763 or [helpdesk@mbts.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mbts.edu).

### 1.6.2. Student Email Account

A student email account will be created for each Midwestern student. The account will use the same convention as the login ID for the Student Portal. Using the John Doe example, the e-mail account would be jdoe15394@student.mbts.edu. Student email accounts can be accessed at <http://mail.student.mbts.edu>.

**Please note that ALL college, seminary, and course related e-mail correspondence will use the new student email account.**

If a student desires to utilize a secondary e-mail address (i.e. an established personal email account), simply login to the MBTS student email account and forward email correspondence to the appropriate account.

Many vendors and retailers offer benefits to students with a valid educational institution email address (.edu) including the following:

1. Microsoft Office Professional Academic 2010 and Windows 7 Professional (<http://www.microsoft.com/student/office/en-us/default.aspx>)
2. Amazon Student (<http://www.amazon.com/gp/student/signup/info>)

3. Sam's Club Collegiate Membership (<http://www.samsclub.com/sams/pagedetails/content.jsp?pageName=compareMembership-BenefitsColl>)

### 1.6.3. Student/Campus Wireless Internet Access (Wi-Fi)

MBTS has modified the wireless connectivity on campus to provide a simpler, consistent way to connect to the internet. Access is provided via a WPA-secured network that allows users to save their settings, allowing access each time students are on-campus without providing credentials. The login information for the new student wireless is:

<b>SSID:</b>	<b>StudentWireless</b>
<b>Password/key:</b>	<b>mbtswireless</b>

Placards are located throughout the campus with this information. Additional information regarding all these services can be found in the Student Technology Services Guide available for viewing and download on the Current Students section of the MBTS website ([http://www.mbts.edu/current\\_students](http://www.mbts.edu/current_students)).

## 1.7. Doctoral Study Carrel Policy

Study Carrels are assigned to doctoral students as follows:

1. PhD students may reserve a study carrel by the semester. PhD students may request carrel space by contacting the Research Librarian in the MBTS library.
2. DMin and DEdMin students may reserve study carrels for two weeks at a time. Professional Doctorate students may request carrel space, if available, two weeks in advance.
3. A reservation list will be maintained by the Research Librarian.
4. Masters and Undergraduate students may use unassigned carrels with permission, but may not reserve use of the carrels nor will storage keys be provided for these students.
5. Lost keys will be replaced at a cost of \$25

## 1.8. Candidacy

For purposes of nomenclature, students in the PhD program become 'candidates' for the PhD degree **only** after the PhD Director and the Doctoral Studies Committee have formally approved their dissertation proposals.

## 1.9. Fellows and Adjunct Instructors

A PhD student in good standing may be asked by a member of the MBTS faculty to serve as a fellow during the course of an academic semester. Fellows normally serve the professor as a grader and research assistant. On occasion, they may fill in for the professor

during an absence. Fellows must be approved by the Academic Dean's office. Hours and remuneration related to service as a fellow are set by the Provost.

In addition, qualified PhD students in good standing may be enlisted by the Provost for service as adjunctive instructors at the undergraduate or online level. Qualified instructors will possess an appropriate Master's degree, relevant experience, and meet all the teaching requirements of the Seminary. Students interested in teaching should contact the Dean of Online Studies and/or the Provost for appropriate documentation needed to serve adjunctively with the institution.

PhD Candidates (or students at the ABD level) may also be enlisted by the Provost to serve as adjunctive instructors in foundational courses of the Master's level programs. Qualified instructors will possess an appropriate Master's degree, relevant experience, and meet all teaching requirements of the Seminary.

## 2. Program Prior to Dissertation

### 2.1. Grading and Student Records

A grade of B- is the lowest mark that will be regarded as passing and credited toward a PhD degree. However, students who receive a B- will be placed on academic probation. Students receiving two B- grades in one semester may face termination from the program (see section 1.5.6. Academic Probation). In general, students must maintain an overall 3.0 GPA in the program.

#### 2.1.1. Grade Scale

Grading Scale	A	A-
B+	97-100	94-96
B	87-89	85-86
C+	78-81	76-77
C	69-72	65-68
D+		
D		

#### 2.1.2. Doctoral Studies Unofficial Audit

A list of completed work is available to every student on the Student Portal. Students may also request a Doctoral Studies unofficial audit at any time during their study by contacting the Doctoral Studies Office (816-414-3775). Five business days must be allowed for a response.

## **2.2. Seminar Structure**

The Association of Theological Schools standards mandate that all doctoral studies programs:

*... shall provide for substantial periods of interaction on a campus of the member institution to assure sufficient opportunity for disciplined reflection on one's experience and needs for educational growth; sustained involvement with regular full time faculty; extended involvement in peer learning; and access to the resources of the institution, especially the library (Association of Theological Schools, p. 53).*

Accordingly, all students are required to take the majority of their seminars on campus. Seminars will provide no less than forty hours of classroom time for a 4-credit course. Professors may schedule class time during the day, over meal times, and sometimes into the evenings of the days scheduled for class.

All PhD seminars involve pre-seminar and post-seminar work as well as the on campus classroom time (minimum of 40 hours) during the term of the course.

1. Pre-seminar work: Each seminar begins 60 days before the first day of the on campus classroom time. Students will be given assignments to be completed and submitted on the Blackboard Portal.
2. Syllabus: The seminar syllabus and assignment materials are posted on or before the first day of the Class start date on Blackboard (60 days before the first day of classroom time).
3. Post-seminar work: Each seminar ends 4 weeks following the last day of the classroom time. Students will complete assignments and submit them on the Blackboard Portal.

## **2.3. Biblical Studies Emphases**

The PhD program at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary currently offers a research doctorate in Biblical Studies with concentrations in Apologetics, Ethics, Historical Theology, Ministry, Missiology, Preaching, Theology, New Testament or Old Testament. The student chooses an appropriate emphasis in which to study during the application process. Other than the seminars within the Doctoral Core, all of the seminars are taken in the student's chosen area of emphasis. For further description of these emphases and corresponding requirements, see below.

## **2.4. Student Advisement**

Prior to the comprehensive examination phase of the PhD program, students will be advised in the program by the PhD Director and the Doctoral Studies Office. Students are encouraged to consult with faculty concerning their interests and immediate and long-range goals and direction in choosing potential dissertation topics. In the comprehensive

examination and dissertation phases of the program, students will work with individual faculty to accomplish these goals.

## 2.5. Language Requirements

Students in the PhD program must demonstrate an adequate working knowledge of both Greek and Hebrew. Demonstration of competency in both languages is required prior to admission to the program, unless otherwise approved by the Doctoral Studies Committee. Students lacking the required level of competency in either language may be admitted provisionally with the understanding that such deficiency should be remedied as soon as possible and preferably by the end of the first year of PhD studies. Acceptable competency in all required languages must be confirmed prior to taking comprehensive exams.

<b>PhD Emphasis</b>	<b>Greek</b>	<b>Hebrew</b>
Biblical Studies	12 hours	12 hours
Old Testament	6 hours	12 hours
New Testament	12 hours	6 hours
Theology	6 hours	6 hours
Historical Theology	6 hours	6 hours
Apologetics	6 hours	6 hours
Ethics	6 hours	6 hours
Preaching	6 hours	6 hours
Missiology <sup>2</sup>	6 hours	6 hours
Ministry	6 hours	6 hours

The level of competency in Greek and Hebrew is dictated by the particular needs of each emphasis. The basis for judging competency in all PhD language requirements is determined by a set number of credit hours earned in study at the Masters level or higher. So for example, the combined Biblical Studies emphasis needs a competency which is the equivalent of 12 hours of Greek and 12 hours of Hebrew earned on the Masters level. The chart below lists the required credit hours for Greek and Hebrew by emphasis. The various ways in which each competency may be verified are listed below.

Students are also required to demonstrate a reading knowledge of one modern research language. Normally, the modern language would be either German or French. However, students may appeal to the Doctoral Studies Committee to substitute another modern language or statistics in lieu of German or French. The determination of the language to be required will take into consideration the student's area of specialization, particular needs, and future ministry goals. For example, students enrolling in the Biblical Missiology emphasis may demonstrate proficiency in the language requirement of their chosen area of missional engagement. Other than German or French, the Doctoral Studies Committee must approve the language requested by the student.

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<sup>2</sup> Applicants who earned the Midwestern MDiv ICP (2 plus 2 or 2 plus 3) may qualify without additional language study.

Students must demonstrate or substantiate an acceptable reading knowledge of a modern language prior to taking comprehensive exams. If a student does not do so, that student will be placed on interrupted status and must remedy the deficiency within one semester. Failure to confirm modern language competency in a timely manner will place the student on probationary status and may cause termination from the program.

Competency in a language may be demonstrated in any one of the following ways:

1. By attending and passing a Master's level course in the language at MBTS (Greek, Hebrew, Theological German, or Theological French). Tuition for these courses is the responsibility of the student and is not included in the PhD program tuition.
2. By attending and passing a comparable course on a Master's level at an accredited educational institution (see [www.chea.org](http://www.chea.org)). The student must confirm the completion of the course by submitting an official transcript showing a passing grade. The student may also be requested to furnish an official syllabus for the course.
3. By passing an approved exam proctored by an authorized faculty or staff member of MBTS. A fee will be charged for the exam. Applicants may contact the Doctoral Studies Office ([docstudies@mbts.edu](mailto:docstudies@mbts.edu)) for more details.
4. By providing acceptable evidence to the Doctoral Study Committee substantiating the required level of proficiency.

## 2.6. PhD Seminar Requirements

### 2.6.1. Core Seminars (16 hrs)

DR00000	Doctoral Orientation	0 hrs
DR30020	Doctoral Studies Colloquium	4 hrs
DR30060	Integrating Christian Faith & Practice (OR)	
D2.R35090	Advanced Biblical Hermeneutics	4 hrs
DR34080	Teaching Principles and Methods in Higher Education	4 hrs
DR30090	Dissertation Seminar	4 hrs

### 2.6.2. PhD Emphasis Seminars (24 hours)

#### 2.6.2.1. Biblical Studies (NT & OT)

DR35110	Advanced Hebrew Grammar (OR)	
DR35150	Advanced Greek Grammar	4 hrs
	Two or three seminars from the OT emphasis & Two or three seminars from the NT emphasis	20 hrs

#### 2.6.2.2. Ethics

DR38405	Worldview and Ethical Theory	4 hrs
DR38440	Contemporary Issues in Ethics	4 hrs

DR38441	Marriage & Sexuality	4 hrs
DR38442	Bioethics	4 hrs
DR38301	Ethics	4 hrs
	Selected Elective (from Theology)	4 hrs

#### 2.6.2.3. Ministry Emphasis

DR31280	The Bible and Pastoral Care	4 hrs
DR36220	Preaching and Ministry Practice	4 hrs
DR37305	Theology and Culture	4 hrs
DR37337	Ecclesiology	4 hrs
	Selected Electives (from Ministry, Leadership/Pastoral, or Preaching)	8 hrs

#### 2.6.2.4. Missiology Emphasis

DR33330	Missiology	4 hrs
DR37305	Theology and Culture	4 hrs
DR37337	Ecclesiology	4 hrs
DR38405	Worldview and Ethical Theory	4 hrs
	Selected Electives (from Church Planting/Mission/Revitalization)	8 hrs

#### 2.6.2.5. Preaching Emphasis

DR36220	Preaching & Ministry Practice	4 hrs
DR36250	Preaching from the Old Testament	4 hrs
DR36260	Preaching from the New Testament	4 hrs
DR36271	Expository Preaching	4 hrs
DR36272	Style & Application in Expository Preaching	4 hrs
DR36273	Doctrinal & Topical Exposition	4 hrs

#### 2.6.2.6. Theology Emphasis

DR37305	Theology and Culture	4 hrs
DR37337	Ecclesiology	4 hrs
DR37350	Old Testament Theology	4 hrs
DR37360	New Testament Theology	4 hrs
DR36395	Adv. Systematic Theology	4 hrs
	Selected Elective (from Biblical Ethics, Historical Theology, NT, OT, or Apologetics)	4 hrs

#### 2.6.2.7. Historical Theology Emphasis

DR37305	Theology and Culture	4 hrs
DR37337	Ecclesiology	4 hrs
DR37370	The Early Church	4 hrs
DR37375	The Reformation	4 hrs

DR37380	The Modern Era	4 hrs
DR37385	The Baptist Tradition	4 hrs

#### 2.6.2.8. New Testament Emphasis

DR35150	Advanced Greek Grammar	4 hrs
DR35610	Synoptic Gospels and Acts	4 hrs
DR35620	Johannine Literature	4 hrs
DR35630	Pauline Epistles	4 hrs
DR35640	General Epistles	4 hrs
	Selected Elective (from DR35155, DR36260, DR37360, or DR38460)	4 hrs

#### 2.6.2.9. Old Testament Emphasis

DR35110	Advanced Hebrew Grammar	4 hrs
DR35510	Pentateuch	4 hrs
DR35520	Historical Books	4 hrs
DR35530	Prophetic Books	4 hrs
DR35540	Poetic & Wisdom Books	4 hrs
	Selected Elective (from DR35115, DR36250, DR37350, or DR38450)	4 hrs

#### 2.6.2.10. Apologetics Emphasis

DR33330	Missiology	4 hrs
DR37001	Science and Origins	4 hrs
DR37002	World Religions	4 hrs
DR37360	OR 37350: New/Old Testament Theology	4 hrs
DR38405	Worldview & Ethical Theory	4 hrs
DR37391	Philosophical Theology	4 hrs

### 2.7. Sequence of Study

Upon admission, the student will be enrolled in DR00000, Doctoral Orientation, for 0 credit hours. Students are expected to begin the program by taking DR30020 Doctoral Studies Colloquium first. PhD students in the Biblical Studies (OT & NT), Old Testament, New Testament, Apologetics, Ethics, Historical Theology, or Theology emphases should take DR35090 Advanced Biblical Hermeneutics. Students in Preaching, Missiology and Ministry emphases should take DR30060 Integrating Christian Faith & Practice. DR30090 Comprehensive Examination may not be taken until the student has successfully passed DR 39090 Dissertation Seminar.

## 2.8. Directed Study and Audits

### 2.8.1. Directed Study

Students may petition the Doctoral Studies Committee for permission to take up to eight hours (two seminars) by Directed Study. **Foundational Core Seminars may not be taken by directed study.** Two types of directed study are considered:

1. **Specialized Studies:** A student with specialized skills or interest in a specific area may submit a request for specialized study to the PhD Director and the Director of Doctoral studies. The request should include a syllabus (learning contract) with a course description, objectives, assignments, and the credentials of the seminar leader(s). A sample syllabus is available upon request.
2. **Alternative Studies:** When scheduling or logistic concerns arise, a student may submit a letter requesting permission to enroll in an alternative study. The request should include a syllabus with a course description, objectives, assignments, and the credentials of the seminar leader(s), and the name of the institution offering the course.

The committee will assess each petition by the following criteria:

1. The directed study must be conducted at a doctoral level.
2. Requirements (contact hours and work load) must be commensurate with those of Midwestern's seminars, including a minimum of 500 pages per credit hour and a significant exit paper of no less than 20 pages.
3. Significant interaction with professionals in the area of study.
4. A full description of the directed study and its requirements must be submitted to the PhD Director and the Director of Doctoral Studies by the student.

Additionally, the student is responsible for any costs incurred in completing the seminar/study, including the directed study fee, \$500, billed to the student's account, in addition to the normal tuition. The seminar/study must be completed within a semester, or a time frame agreed to by the Director of Doctoral Studies and the student. The student will be working closely with a Midwestern Professor-of-Record through the duration of the directed study, as appointed by the Director. A copy of all work related to the study must be sent to the Professor-of-Record and to the Doctoral Studies Office for the permanent file where it can be reviewed by the Director of Doctoral Studies upon completion.

### 2.8.2. Auditing Research Doctoral Seminars

If not already admitted, students seeking to audit a research doctoral course must first apply as a NDS student (see above section 1.3.4.3). Auditing students will pay a fee of \$125 per credit hour. Written permission to audit by the professor is required, and class discussions and activities of auditing students are at the discretion of the professor.

## **2.9. Comprehensive Examination**

### **2.9.1 Overview and Purpose**

DR39090 PhD Comprehensive Examination is the final course in the PhD sequence. This phase of the student's work consists of a substantial writing project, completed under supervision, which demonstrates readiness for independent doctoral research. Readiness is indicated by the student's ability (a) to identify a promising area for additional research within his chosen emphasis, (b) to evaluate the state of the question within that area of potential research, (c) to formulate a research question on the basis of his own evaluation of the primary and secondary literature related to his research area, and (d) design a course of investigation that promises to answer his own research question.

### **2.9.2. Comprehensive Examination Goals and Objectives:**

1. The student will demonstrate advanced ability to collect, analyze, and synthesize exegetical, historical, and theological evidence related to a chosen field of doctoral study.
2. The student will demonstrate advanced ability to identify an area within his chosen field of study that calls for additional investigation.
3. The student will demonstrate advanced ability to formulate a research question that is answerable within the structure of supervised doctoral studies.
4. The student will demonstrate advanced ability to plan and initiate a course of research designed to answer his research question.

From the description and goals indicated above, it will be clear that the comprehensive examination provides a direct basis for the student's subsequent dissertation proposal.

### **2.9.3. Supervision**

Students enrolled in the 39090 PhD Comprehensive Examination will conduct their work under the supervision of an MBTS faculty member who is capable of evaluating the quality and promise of the work submitted. This faculty member is the primary evaluator of the student's readiness to commence independent doctoral research, based on the quality of the final submitted essay.

### **2.9.4. Duration**

The examination process occurs for one semester and is renewable for an additional semester. Extensions of the examination process beyond two semesters must be secured in writing through the Doctoral Studies Office and must be accepted by the Doctoral Studies Committee. Failure to complete the examination process in a timely manner, as stipulated by Doctoral Studies Office, will result in the student's being terminated from the PhD program, with possible award of a ThM for work completed to date.

### 2.9.5. Evaluation

The student's performance will be evaluated in accordance with highly specified rubrics which intend to summarize the concept of readiness for independent doctoral research and areas of weakness by the same standard. These rubrics appear as appendices to this PhD Handbook.

### 2.10. Course Rotation

Colloquium and seminars will normally be offered on a two- or three-year rotation. Please note that seminar schedules are subject to change.

## 3. Dissertation Research and Writing

### 3.1. Overview

Under faculty supervision, each student must complete and defend a dissertation related to a specific area within his chosen emphasis. The student must demonstrate the ability to investigate and effectively communicate original research or new insight as a substantial and significant contribution to his chosen field of study. It is not essential that the dissertation's results align with the views of the student's Dissertation Committee or those of the seminary faculty as a whole; but those results must be carefully and competently defended at an advanced level.

### 3.2. Comprehensive Examination and Dissertation Proposal

After the successful completion of the Dissertation Seminar, students will enroll in DR39090 Comprehensive Examination. As the student's work in the Comprehensive Examination aligns closely with the dissertation proposal itself, work done to pass the Comprehensive Examination will perforce equip the student to finalize his dissertation proposal. Upon approval of the proposal itself, the student is enrolled in DR40980 PhD Dissertation – Ongoing Research until the dissertation is completed and defended.

#### 3.2.1. Development and Submission of the Proposal

During the DR 30090 Dissertation Seminar the student receives initial instruction concerning the design and implementation of an in-depth research process. This instruction prepares the student to prepare the Comprehensive Examination essay, which in turn facilitates the submission of a viable dissertation proposal. Well before this time, however, students are encouraged to consider carefully a potential area for doctoral research and to discuss their ideas with members of the MBTS faculty for direction and refinement. While the student's investment of time and effort prior to the Dissertation Seminar and Comprehensive Examination does not guarantee approval of his proposal, such effort makes a favorable outcome in this regard more likely because the student has invested the time needed to be especially prepared.

### 3.2.2 Submission of the PhD Dissertation Proposal

Once the student has identified a promising field of research, he must submit a formal proposal to the Doctoral Studies Office. This proposal is a summary, consisting of no more than 5000 words (excluding footnotes and bibliography), which captures the essence of the Comprehensive Examination essay. As such, the proposal must include the following elements:

1. An introductory section which identifies the area of research and its significance for the wider project of theological scholarship.
2. A more substantial section which establishes the state of the question related to the student's proposed field of research, summarizing where matters as to our grasp of the student's area of research.
3. A section which identifies the potential contribution made by the student's proposed course of research, including a succinct research question that will govern the student's investigation.
4. A specific investigative plan which may be expected to answer the research question, including central aspects of the research method, nature of sources to be consulted, etc.

The proposal, therefore, provides an overall roadmap for the dissertation process, enabling the Doctoral Studies Committee to assess the viability of the student's research area and plan.

### 3.2.3. Style of the Proposal

The style of the dissertation proposal is governed precisely by two central documents, viz., the MBTS Style Manual and the Dissertation Proposal Rubric (DPR) appearing as an appendix to this document. The student must be adhered to entirely, across all aspects covered in the DPR, as these aspects are integral to the excellence of a defensible doctoral dissertation and because they permit the Doctoral Studies Committee to render a timely decision as to the viability of the student's proposal.

### 3.2.4. Modifications to Proposed Course of Research

In the course of dissertation research, the student may find that the proposed plan of work has to be modified so that the final shape of the dissertation is different from that envisaged originally. This is a normal development within the dissertation process. In such cases, the faculty supervisor and the student must notify the PhD Director in writing of any major changes, but the proposal would not, in this circumstance, need to be resubmitted. The PhD Director will determine if the proposed changes are significant enough to warrant resubmission of the proposal.

### **3.3. Appointment of the Dissertation Committee**

Once the student has submitted his dissertation proposal, the latter is forwarded to the Doctoral Studies Committee. Then, during the next regularly scheduled Doctoral Studies Committee meeting, the student's proposal is considered with three possible outcomes, viz., (1) approved, (2) approved with mandated revisions, and (3) denied. A denied proposal may be resubmitted, but it may not be resubmitted earlier than three months following the student's being notified of its initial failure. Mandated revisions are verified by the committee chairman to which the student's dissertation is assigned. It is to be noted, however, that while the institution makes substantial effort to assign to each student the supervisor of his choice, it is not possible for the Committee to guarantee this outcome.

### **3.4. Satisfactory Academic Progress**

After the PhD Director and the Doctoral Studies Committee approve the proposal, the student will continue to research and write the dissertation until it is successfully defended. Failure to defend the dissertation by the end of the eighth year from the beginning of study for the PhD may result in termination from the program. During the dissertation research process, the student is required to keep his committee apprised of his progress through monthly dissertation progress reports. Failure to report on a monthly basis is grounds for dismissal from the PhD program, as it constitutes prima facie evidence that satisfactory academic progress not being made.

### **3.5. External Readers**

As the student's particular research proposal warrants, he may request an external or outside reader for the dissertation; and external readers are frequently engaged by the Doctoral Studies Office for this purpose. External readers will possess demonstrated research expertise in the specific area of the dissertation, and they may also be invited to serve as third readers of the dissertation. Nevertheless, in all cases, the Doctoral Studies Committee must approve each outside reader; and students must refrain from asking external readers to serve on their committees, as these requests must come from Doctoral Studies Office. At the same time, the student is responsible for negotiating and providing any fee or payment required by the outside reader, if the student requests an external reader whose services are not seen as essential by the Doctoral Studies Committee (e.g., as a non-essential third reader).

If the external reader is either the first or second member of the student's committee, his recommendations are to be acted on by the student before the dissertation defense. If the external reader occupies the third chair, he is expected to offer recommendations and suggestions to improve the work, as would the other committee members. These recommendations may be accepted in full or in part, or they may be rejected by the dissertation committee. If the dissertation committee rejects the recommendations of the outside reader, the chair will submit in writing to the PhD Director the reasons for doing so. The final authority regarding acceptability of the student's dissertation remains with the dissertation committee.

### **3.6. Style of the Dissertation**

Unless otherwise established by the Doctoral Studies Committee, the parts of the dissertation will follow the style delineated in the MBTS Style Handbook and contain the elements required by the PhD Dissertation Rubric, the latter appearing as an appendix to this Handbook. Immediately after the title page, the dissertation shall include an approval page on which, following the successful defense of the dissertation, the members of the Dissertation Committee will place their signatures of approval. This approval page will be provided by the Doctoral Studies Office. The student is also required to include a dissertation abstract of no more than 100 words suitable for publication in research databases.

### **3.7. Length of the Dissertation**

The body of the dissertation should not exceed 80,000 words, excluding footnotes and bibliography. Only under unusual circumstances will a dissertation be less than 65,000 words. Candidates must, however, avoid the temptation to place substantial parts of their larger argument in footnotes or excursive material. The emphasis falls, therefore, on quality and not quantity, on exactitude of expression, not verbosity. In rare instances, permission may be given by the Dissertation Committee to fall short of the minimum or exceed the maximum word-count.

### **3.8. Writing the Dissertation**

Students will submit chapters to the chair of their Dissertation Committee (first reader) as they are written. When the chair is satisfied with each chapter, he will instruct the student to submit the chapter or chapters to the second reader. In all cases, the sequence and timing of submission is to be determined in consultation with the student's first reader or Dissertation Committee Chairman.

### **3.9. Submission of the Dissertation Draft**

After the student has written and revised all of the chapters of the dissertation, he will submit the full Dissertation Draft to the Dissertation Committee Chairman, Second Reader, and any External Reader who has been engaged in the supervisory process. With their agreement, the student may then petition to defend the dissertation, having submitted two hard copies and one electronic PDF file of the Dissertation Draft to the Doctoral Studies Office. Drafts submitted by mail to the members of the Dissertation Committee must be postmarked no later than February 15 for May graduation or September 15 for December graduation. Under extenuating circumstances, faculty chairs may request an extension.

## **4. Dissertation Defense**

### **4.1 Overview**

The purpose of the dissertation defense is primarily to ensure that the candidate is himself the actual author of the submitted work and that no part of it has been completed by or in collaboration with any other scholar. It also provides an opportunity for the candidate to clarify and defend controversial points that may not have been fully covered in the dissertation itself.

### **4.2. Participants**

Once the Doctoral Studies Office has received the dissertation, the Dissertation Committee chair will schedule the oral defense. The student will defend the dissertation in front of the members of the student's committee and possibly other MBTS faculty members as requested by the Dissertation Committee chair. The PhD Director, the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, the Provost, and the President have standing invitations to attend all oral defenses of PhD dissertations.

### **4.3. Format**

In this interview, the committee members will ask questions which, as indicated above, intend to verify that the student has personally done the work in question and that the student understands the overall significance of his own dissertation. The student will also be asked to defend any controversial points of the work—e.g., the thesis statement, the methodology, or the conclusions—and also show that the student's dissertation has involved significant research and reflection.

### **4.4. Duration**

The students should plan to be in the defense session for approximately two hours and should bring to this meeting a copy of the dissertation and supporting documents that may be helpful to the defense. Since this is a formal examination, formal attire is appropriate and requested.

### **4.5. Evaluation and Response**

Upon the completion of the oral defense, the student will be dismissed from the conference room and the Dissertation Committee will determine the outcome of the interview following the PhD Dissertation standards of the Seminary. Four options are available to the committee:

1. Pass Orals and Approve Dissertation with no revisions or only minor revisions. Any revisions should be reflected in the final copies submitted for binding, but do not require dissertation committee review.

2. Pass Orals with Dissertation Revisions Required. Graduation will be contingent upon major revisions and review by the committee prior to submission for binding. The committee chair will notify the doctoral office when revisions have been approved.
3. Fail with the recommendation that the student make major revisions and defend the dissertation a second time.
4. Fail with recommendation that the student not be allowed to re-defend. This recommendation will be submitted to the Doctoral Studies Committee.

After the oral defense has been completed, the chair of the Dissertation Committee will notify the Doctoral Studies office of the outcome by submitting a completed Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation Standards rubric and a completed Doctor of Philosophy Oral Defense Standards rubric. The chair will also discuss with the student the verdict of the committee and what further steps may be necessary.

#### **4.6. Submitting the Final Copies of the Dissertation**

Once the oral defense has been completed and the dissertation has been approved, the student must submit four (4) hard copies and one electronic PDF file to the Doctoral Studies office. These must be postmarked by May 1 or December 1 of the semester the student plans to graduate. These copies must contain any corrections or revisions required by the Dissertation Committee following the defense. The committee chair must approve the final copy before copies of the final draft are submitted to the Doctoral Studies office for binding.

The four hard copies must be printed on water-marked, 20 pound, 100% cotton rag, acid-free paper. All copies must be of a high quality, clean, consistent, and free of smudges, having a 1.5 inch margin on the left side for purposes of binding.

The student will be billed and must pay the costs of binding by May 1 or December 1 respectively. Copies of the dissertation will be placed in the MBTS library and the Doctoral Studies Office and made available through the *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Database* or other acceptable venues.

#### **4.7. Copyright and Database Submission**

##### **4.7.1. Dissertation Copyright**

The copyright to the dissertation belongs to the student. As a condition of being awarded the degree, however, the student grants Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary the non-exclusive right to retain, use and distribute a limited number of copies of the thesis, together with the right to require its publication for archival use.

#### 4.7.2. Database Submission

Students are expected to submit an electronic copy of the dissertation to the *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Database*. Students will also have the option, for a fee, to submit the dissertation to the Open Access Publishing PLUS option available from ProQuest. The Doctoral Studies office will provide instructions on completing this.

## **5. Appendices and Forms**

- 5.1. Proposal Approval Sheet
- 5.2. Sample Proposal Title Page
- 5.3. Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation Standards Rubric
- 5.4. Doctor of Philosophy Oral Defense Standards Rubrics
- 5.5. External Reader Request Form
- 5.6. External Reader Dissertation Defense Grade Sheet

MIDWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
PROPOSAL APPROVAL SHEET

Student's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed title of Dissertation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Field of study: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
PhD Director

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Doctoral Studies Committee Chairman

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dissertation Committee Chair (First Reader)

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dissertation Committee Second Reader

Date of Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

(The student will enter appropriate information and submit four copies of this form along with four copies of the proposal to the PhD Director.)

(SAMPLE PROPOSAL TITLE PAGE)

A STUDY OF THE THEOLOGY  
OF JONATHAN EDWARDS

A Dissertation Proposal  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

by  
John A. Baptist  
May 15, 1980

## Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation Standards Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Dissertation Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	1 Deficient	2 Substandard	3 Acceptable	4 Excellent
<b>Introduction</b>	Does not address the research topic or describe the motivation and the context of the study; offers no summary of the importance of the dissertation's findings	Less clearly address the research topic, or describe the motivation and the context of the study; offers limited summary of the importance of the dissertation's findings	Adequately addresses the research topic, describes the motivation and the context of the study, and adequately summarizes the importance of the dissertation's findings	Makes clear the research topic to be addressed, describes the motivation and the context of the study, summarizes the importance of the dissertation's findings
<b>Review of Literature</b>	Displays no knowledge of the relevant literature	Displays very little command of the relevant literature	Displays an adequate command of the relevant literature that is less selective, synthetic, analytical, and thematic	Displays a comprehensive and up-to-date command of the relevant literature that is selective, synthetic, analytical, and thematic
<b>Purpose/Theory &amp; Justification</b>	Purpose/theory is not clear, specific, or defined	Weakly defined purpose or theory, not very limited or defined	Reasonably clear purpose or theory, somewhat limited, defined, logical, obtainable, and justified	Clearly defined purpose or theory, which is limited, defined, logical, obtainable, and well justified
<b>Methodology</b>	No clear, specific, or defined educational setting	Little ministry setting context or research provided	Adequate ministry setting context and research provided	Defined ministry setting and substantive research provided
<b>Research</b>	Showed little support of having done original research	Minimum articulation of research findings and implications	Adequate support of original research and understanding of implications	Enthusiastic discussion of the student's research and its impact upon the project and dissertation
<b>Results</b>	Little, if any, significant data is produced	A limited amount of data is produced and not well presented	The data is adequate and/or not well presented.	The amount and quality of data or information is sufficient and well presented.
<b>Analysis of Results</b>	Little or no understanding of the findings, unable to relate to field and purpose/theory	Limited understanding of the findings and their relationship to the field, is not directly related to purpose/theory, or less well interpreted	Adequate understanding of the findings and their relationship to the field, aligns with purpose/theory, and is well interpreted	Advanced understanding of the findings and their relationship to the field, aligns with purpose/theory, and is intelligently interpreted
<b>Implications for Future Study</b>	No presentation of additional studies or projects that stem from the study's analysis	One presentation of additional studies or projects that stem from the study's analysis	Two presentations of additional studies or projects that stem from the study's analysis	Three or more presentations of additional studies or projects that stem from the study's analysis
<b>Conclusion</b>	No evidence of evidence of final contribution, little identification of strengths and weakness, and does not connect everything together	Minimal evidence of final contribution, little identification of strengths and weakness, and minimally connects everything together	Adequate evidence of final contribution, some identification of strengths and weakness, and adequately connects everything together	Substantive evidence of final contribution, identification of strengths and weakness, and connects everything together
<b>Bibliography</b>	Several footnoted references are not included; inadequate in coverage and content	Three or more footnoted references not included; limited and lacking in available references	No more than two footnoted references not included; adequate and somewhat comprehensive	All footnoted references included; sufficient and comprehensive
<b>Form: Adherence to SBL Handbook or Turabian, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition</b>	Minimal conformity with substantial changes needed	Limited conformity with numerous changes needed	Substantive conformity with occasional changes needed	Complete conformity with only minor changes needed
<b>Citations</b>	Improper documentation and reference, possible plagiarism issues	Occasional documentation and reference errors, possible unintentional plagiarism issues, secondary sources	Adequate documentation, minimal errors, no plagiarism issues	Thorough and complete documentation, no plagiarism

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Doctor of Philosophy Oral Defense Standards Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Dissertation Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	1 Deficient	2 Substandard	3 Acceptable	4 Excellent
<b>Overall Presentation</b>	No engagement of listeners, no variety of teaching approaches, little creativity, poor use of time, Little sense of poise or confidence	Some engagement of listeners, at two teaching methods used, fair use of time, some sense of poise and confidence	Adequate engagement of listeners, at least two or more teaching methods used, adequate use of time, poise and confidence expressed	Listeners engaged, variety of teaching methods used in support of materials, well organized, informative, good use of time, creativity evident, strong sense of poise and confidence
<b>Purpose/Theory &amp; Justification</b>	Purpose/theory is not clear, specific, or defined	Weakly defined purpose or theory, not very limited or defined	Reasonably clear purpose or theory, somewhat limited, defined, logical, obtainable, and justified	Clearly defined purpose or theory, which is limited, defined, logical, obtainable, and well justified
<b>Research &amp; Review of Literature</b>	Showed little support of having done original research	Minimum articulation of research findings and implications	Adequate support of original research and understanding of implications	Enthusiastic discussion of the students research and its impact upon the project and dissertation
<b>Methodology</b>	Not clear, specific, or defined	The explanation of the methodology is vague and undeveloped. The author is unaware of its advantages or disadvantages.	The explanation of the methodology is adequate. The author has a less sophisticated understanding of its strengths or weaknesses.	The methodology applied is appropriate and described in detail. The author demonstrates how to use the method and recognizes its advantages and disadvantages.
<b>Results</b>	Little, if any, significant data is produced	A limited amount of data is produced and not well presented	The data is adequate and/or not well presented.	The amount and quality of data or information is sufficient and well presented.
<b>Analysis of Results</b>	Little or no understanding of the findings, unable to relate to field and purpose/theory	Limited understanding of the findings and their relationship to the field, is not directly related to purpose/theory, or less well interpreted	Adequate understanding of the findings and their relationship to the field, aligns with purpose/theory, and is well interpreted	Advanced understanding of the findings and their relationship to the field, aligns with purpose/theory, and is intelligently interpreted
<b>Implications for Further Study</b>	No presentation of additional studies that stem from the study's analysis	One presentation of additional studies that stem from the study's analysis	Two presentations of additional studies that stem from the study's analysis	Three or more presentations of additional studies that stem from the study's analysis
<b>Conclusion</b>	No evidence of evidence of final contribution, little identification of strengths and weakness, and does connects everything together	Minimal evidence of final contribution, little identification of strengths and weakness, and minimally connects everything together	Adequate evidence of final contribution, some identification of strengths and weakness, and adequately connects everything together	Substantive evidence of final contribution, identification of strengths and weakness, and connects everything together
<b>Response to Questions</b>	Inability to adequately respond to questions, no clear and supportive responses	Adequate response to questions, somewhat scripted	Clear response to questions, supported with findings, some integration to the practice of ministry	Clear response to questions, strong grasp of findings and integration to practice of ministry

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Recommendation: Please submit this form to the Doctoral Studies Committee Office.

- Pass Orals and Approve Dissertation with no revisions or only minor revisions. Any revisions should be reflected in the final copies submitted for binding, but do not require dissertation committee review.
- Pass Orals with Dissertation Revisions Required. Graduation will be contingent upon major revisions and review by the committee prior to submission for binding. The committee chair will notify the doctoral office when revisions have been approved.
- Fail with the recommendation that the student make major revisions and defend the dissertation a second time.
- Fail with recommendation that the student not be allowed to re-defend. This recommendation will be submitted to the Doctoral Studies Committee.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### External Reader Request Form

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Dissertation Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated date of dissertation draft submission: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Requested External Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Qualifications: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Submitted,

First Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

Second Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this form to the Doctoral Studies Office for approval of the Doctoral Studies Committee.

## External Reader Dissertation Defense Grade Sheet

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Dissertation/  
Thesis Title:

Please comment on the following (use extra pages as necessary):

1. Logical structure and argumentation
  
2. Research methods and sources
  
3. Overall evaluation (use back of page if needed)
  
4. Grade

Pass  
Pass with minor revisions (please attach)  
Pass, with major revisions (please attach)  
Fail, with recommendation for a second defense  
Fail

Evaluator (please sign): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this sheet to the Doctoral Studies Office, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 5001 N Oak Trafficway, Kansas City, MO 64118. (Scan to [DocStudies@mbts.edu](mailto:DocStudies@mbts.edu) or call 816-414-3755 for more information).

**Appendix:**  
**A Statement of Integrity in Seminary Studies**

The fundamental purpose of the Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is to assist the development of Christian ministers who are equipped to make responsible and relevant witness to the redeeming gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of the vastly complex and rapidly changing modern culture in which God has granted us the grace of life. In accordance with this purpose, therefore, the Seminary dearly cherishes and earnestly seeks to foster among all its students the qualities of spiritual dedication, creative imagination, and personal integrity.

Consequently, the administration and faculty of the Seminary expect, as a minimum requirement, that each student shall do his *own work*. That is to say, the student is to let every test and examination reflect *only* the best results of his own disciplined study. Likewise, every term paper and written report must represent the student's own original approach to the task assigned; and it should not contain either direct quotations or paraphrases of any part of any other writer's book or paper, published or unpublished, for which due credit is not given to the original author. *Such credit should be acknowledged by proper citation (in text, footnotes, and bibliography) of the sources employed.*

Unless otherwise instructed by the professor under whose direction the paper is prepared, *Turabian's Manual for Writers* (with such supplements as may be prepared by the faculty) will serve as a guide to correct form in citing all sources.

It cannot be exaggerated how strongly the Seminary deplures plagiarism in all its forms. Dishonesty is incompatible with the very purpose for which a student avails himself of its ministries. It is to be desired that one remain without a degree rather than to obtain it by dishonest means, for Christianity cannot countenance conduct that contradicts its basic tenets.

It is further to be hoped that each individual will recognize a responsibility for his brother as well as for himself in all such matters.

Adopted by the Faculty  
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary  
October 5, 1961

*\*The Doctoral Studies committee adopted the following addendum on September 29, 2003 for inclusion in the Manual for Doctoral Studies.*

*Due to the fact that plagiarism runs counter to the purpose of higher learning, due to the increased temptation to plagiarize presented by the Internet, and due to an increase in cases of plagiarism, proven intentional plagiarism on the part of any doctoral student will result in a failing grade for the course and automatic dismissal from the program.*