

**MANUAL FOR RESEARCH DOCTORAL
PROGRAMS**

Doctor of Philosophy

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
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INTRODUCTION

(Revision date: 3/7/07)

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary offers a fully accredited, resident, academic research doctoral degree: Doctor of Philosophy. This program is related directly to the official statement of purpose of the seminary:

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary exists 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.

The *Manual for Research Doctoral Programs* is the official handbook for students enrolled in the research doctoral programs and for related faculty and administration. While this manual intends to describe these programs and related procedures and policies, the seminary retains the right to change programs, policies, courses, schedules, teachers, requirements, and all other aspects of the curriculum at any time.

Students as well as faculty members will find this resource invaluable in understanding the format, policies, procedures, and related matters for the research doctoral programs at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Both students and faculty members are expected to master the contents of this manual and abide by its stipulations.

All research doctoral program forms may be obtained from the Office of Research Doctoral Programs, and many are available on the Ph.D. area of the seminary Web site.

I. ADMINISTRATION OF DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

A. Faculty (Revision date: 9/22/99)

Responsibility for making policy decisions for the doctoral programs rests with the faculty of the graduate school of the seminary. The faculty has responsibilities such as

- Establishing standards for admission, candidacy, and graduation
- Determining degree requirements
- Recommending candidates for degrees
- Establishing an annual calendar
- Reviewing degree programs

B. Academic Leadership/Provost's Council (Revision date: 8/5/14)

The Academic Leadership/Provost's Council has responsibility to consider and recommend to the faculty all matters involving the standards of instruction, the determination of requirements for degrees, testing programs, class schedules, and in general the formulation of the educational policy regarding doctoral programs.

C. Associate Dean of Research Doctoral Programs (Revision date: 8/5/14)

The Associate Dean of Research Doctoral Programs is the chief administrator of the research doctoral programs. (*Hereafter in this document this position is referred to as "the Associate Dean."*) The Associate Dean is responsible for the administration and implementation of academic policies and curricular programs related to research doctoral programs as follows:

- Process applications for admission
- Chair the Research Doctoral Oversight Committee
- Certify applications and reports of doctoral progress
- Present matters for consideration to the Academic Leadership/Provost's Council
- Represent doctoral programs to the Curriculum Committee
- Represent doctoral programs to the Graduate Dean's Council
- Chair the Doctoral Admissions Committee

D. Research Doctoral Oversight Committee (ReDOC) (Revision date: 8/5/14)

The Research Doctoral Oversight Committee (ReDOC) is composed of the Associate Dean of Research Doctoral Programs, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, the Dean of Admissions/Registrar, a representative from each of the academic divisions, and two at-large faculty members. The committee meets monthly during the academic year.

1. Administrative Responsibilities

ReDOC has the responsibility to

- Provide administrative oversight for the research doctoral programs
- Provide comprehensive and cohesive management of the students in the research doctoral programs from recruitment through graduation
- Adjudicate recommendations concerning time extensions, inactive status, transfer of credits, terminations, etc.
- Make programmatic and operational decisions relating to the research doctoral degrees
- Recommend significant policy changes in the research doctoral programs
- Implement and interpret existing policies regarding the research doctoral programs
- Acknowledge withdrawals from the program
- Acknowledge terminations from the programs
- Consider petitions and appeals from students in the programs
- Approve directed study proposals
- Approve IRB requests

2. Review of Prospectuses

Members of ReDOC represent the faculty in providing feedback on the dissertation prospectus. This committee will review the prospectus and give feedback to the guidance committee as to whether or not the proposal shows promise of contribution to the respective academic discipline. In addition, the committee evaluates the prospectus to ensure that the student has appropriately addressed the relevant issues related to the proposal and adequately demonstrated the form and style required of a doctoral dissertation.

ReDOC also gives feedback to the guidance committee regarding human rights issues.

3. Review of IRB Requests

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is a subcommittee of ReDOC consisting of members teaching in areas that deal with human subjects research. This subcommittee advises professors concerning educational exemptions from IRB review and evaluates proposed research with human subjects for degree of risk and protection of participants' rights, such as confidentiality and informed consent. If the IRB determines that the proposed research involves more than minimal risk, the full Research Doctoral Oversight Committee will review it. The research should not proceed without IRB approval. See Section III.I. Institutional Review Board for a detailed explanation of this process.

E. Academic Divisions (Revision date: 8/5/14)

The faculty of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is subdivided by specialty into six divisions, five of which offer Ph.D. majors: Biblical Studies, Christian Education Ministries, Church and Community Ministries, Pastoral Ministries, and Theological and Historical Studies.

1. Responsibilities

Academic divisions have the responsibility to

- Review the doctoral program prerequisites specific to the academic discipline and recommend changes to ReDOC
- Develop and evaluate entrance screening mechanisms, such as entrance examinations, research papers, and entrance interviews, and report the results to the Associate Dean
- Evaluate the research proposal for final approval
- Develop, conduct, and evaluate mechanisms such as qualifying and oral examinations for evaluating the progress of students throughout the research doctoral program, and make recommendations to the Associate Dean

2. Approval of Research Proposal

After initial approval by the student's guidance committee, the academic division, through its four representatives, is responsible for seeking final approval of the research proposal as outlined in Section III-K. If the research proposal is not approved, it will be returned to the student with notations of deficiencies. When the proposal is approved, the Associate Dean will be notified and the student will be given authorization to proceed with the Prospectus Development course.

F. Faculty Guidance (Revision date: 8/5/14)

At the time of admission to a research doctoral program, a faculty member from the major field of study will be assigned to serve as a faculty advisor to the student concerning program matters and preparation for the qualifying examination.

Upon successful completion of the qualifying examination, a two-member guidance committee will be assigned to provide direction, supervision, and evaluation of the student during the senior residency and candidacy stages of the program. The committee is charged with the responsibility of assuring the quality of the student's research and of upholding the high standards of both the institution and the field of research. The committee represents the faculty in its relationship to the student.

The guidance committee is appointed by the Associate Dean in consultation with the chairperson of the academic division and is composed of two persons: a chairperson from the division and specialty of the student's declared major field of study, and a second faculty member from the department.

When the dissertation is submitted for defense, the Associate Dean appoints a third faculty member from outside the division of study as a dissertation reader. The student or the guidance committee may request that an external reader outside the NOBTS faculty be assigned as the third reader.

1. Program Components

The guidance committee (or faculty advisor in the residency/Th.M. candidacy stage) advises and consults with the student throughout the doctoral program.

- a. The committee may advise or require the student to take (for credit or audit) certain doctoral seminars or master's-level courses in order that the student may gain a comprehensive foundation in the major field of study and be enabled to pursue quality research in the chosen discipline.
- b. The committee may advise or require the student to pursue additional technical training in an area (such as a modern foreign language, an ancient language, statistics, or computer research) necessary for quality research in the chosen field of study, especially at the dissertation research stage.
- c. The committee conducts and evaluates the oral comprehensive examination.

2. Dissertation Guidance, Review, and Evaluation

The guidance committee provides guidance, direction, and evaluation through all stages of research, from the topic selection through the final presentation of the dissertation for binding. The committee will

- a. Provide guidance to the student in the selection of a dissertation topic
- b. Approve or reject the research proposal
- c. Review the initial draft of the prospectus, request and secure appropriate revisions, and forward the document to ReDOC for review
- d. Grant final approval of the prospectus
- e. Approve any departure from the title, methodology, or outline delineated in the prospectus
- f. Conduct and evaluate the oral defense of the dissertation (the faculty reader is included at this stage)
- g. Make the final decision regarding the acceptability of the dissertation

3. Role of the Chairperson

The chairperson represents the student to the guidance committee and the guidance committee to the student. All matters to be addressed by the guidance committee should be presented to the chairperson.

G. Student Responsibilities (Revision date: 9/22/99)

The student has final and ultimate responsibility for performance throughout the doctoral program. This responsibility is to be fulfilled in the following areas:

1. The student must adhere to the applicable dates published in the *Graduate Catalog* and the guidelines outlined in this manual for registration and submission of various program documents, such as examination applications, petitions and requests, and the dissertation.
2. All written materials submitted to NOBTS must be the work of the student, who is responsible and accountable for content, form, style, and editing.

3. The student should maintain regular contact with the guidance committee chairperson for direction and counsel throughout the doctoral program. The student should consult with the chairperson before registering each semester.
4. The student is encouraged to audit master's-level courses in the field of study.
5. The student must secure and maintain an email address throughout the program.
6. The student is responsible to maintain current information on address, phone, email etc. with the seminary via NOBTS online. Updated information also should be shared directly with the Office of Research Doctoral Programs.

H. Graduate Catalog (Revision date: 8/5/14)

The seminary publishes a *Graduate Catalog* for each academic year. The student enrolled in a doctoral program is encouraged to read carefully through the *Graduate Catalog* each year. In particular, the student will find helpful current information regarding the academic calendar, current fees, financial aid, etc.

Note the following paragraph regarding the purpose of the *Graduate Catalog*:

This Catalog is intended to describe the Seminary, its programs, and its life. It is not a contract. The Seminary retains the right to change programs, policies, courses, schedules, teachers, requirements, and all other aspects of its ministry at any time. (*Graduate Catalog* for 2013-2014, p. 2)

I. Academic Appeals (Revision date: 8/5/14)

A student may appeal an academic decision of a faculty advisor or guidance committee to the Research Doctoral Oversight Committee. An appeal of a ReDOC decision may be made to the Academic Leadership/Provost's Council.

II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Admissions (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Application and admission policies are described in the current *Graduate Catalog*. Application forms and other information may be obtained in the Office of Research Doctoral Programs and on the Ph.D. area of the seminary Web site.

B. Acceptance and Enrollment (Revision date: 9/22/99)

Once accepted into a research doctoral program, a student must begin his or her program of studies and enroll for seminars in the next regular semester. In the event that an applicant is approved for admission to a doctoral program but cannot begin studies, the applicant's slot will be vacated and the application will be returned to the applicant pool for consideration in the next semester.

C. Active Status (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Students enrolled in doctoral programs must maintain active status by registering and paying the required fees each semester until graduation. Failure to register for a semester and pay enrollment fees by the deadlines established by the seminary will result in termination from the program.

Even when active status is maintained, if no consistent progress toward completion of the degree is accomplished, the continuation of the student in the program is subject to review by the faculty advisor or the guidance committee, which may recommend termination to ReDOC.

D. Inactive Status (Revision date: 7/5/02)

Inactive status may be granted to a student who has temporary extenuating circumstances which hinder progress toward the degree. The following guidelines are operative for recommending and approving inactive status:

1. Inactive status is considered for circumstances beyond the control of a student, such as family, medical, financial, or professional crises which would otherwise force the student to terminate his or her program of study. Inactive status is not granted

to study for the qualifying examination or the oral comprehensive examination, nor normally during the writing of the dissertation. Inactive status is not intended to relieve the student of paying fees, to provide temporary hiatus from the program, or to delay for unsubstantial reason the timely pursuit of the degree.

2. The granting of inactive status will extend the time allowed for completing the degree program by the length of the inactive period.
3. A request for inactive status should be submitted in writing to the faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson. The letter should detail the rationale for the request and the semester for which the inactive status is requested. The request should be submitted as early as possible, but no later than Monday of the week prior to the beginning of classes in the fall or spring semester.

The faculty advisor or the guidance committee chairperson, in consultation with the other member of the committee, will forward a recommendation to ReDOC, which will make a final decision. The Associate Dean will notify the student of the outcome.

4. Inactive status is granted on a semester basis for a maximum of two semesters.
5. Students granted inactive status must pay the inactive status fee for the semester(s). (See *Graduate Catalog* for current fees.)
6. The semester following inactive status, the student must register and pay all fees according to the seminary schedule.

E. Missionary and Military Status (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Foreign missionaries may request missionary status before returning to the mission field. Similarly, students enlisted in the armed forces of the United States may request military status prior to a period of deployment. A request for such status should be submitted in writing to the faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson. The letter should detail the proposed schedule for completion of the degree program. Students requesting military status must include a copy of their official orders.

The faculty advisor or the guidance committee chairperson, in consultation with the other member of the committee, will forward the letter with a recommendation to ReDOC, which will make a final decision. The Associate Dean will notify the student of the outcome.

Missionary or military status is applicable only in those semesters when no work is being done in the program, including research and writing of the dissertation. During such semesters, students must register for inactive status. They would have to register as writing candidates for a minimum of two semesters while working on the dissertation.

Semester updates to the faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson and the Associate Dean are required from those granted missionary status.

A one-time payment of the inactive fee will be required (see the student fees section of the *Graduate Catalog*). The semester following missionary or military status, the student must register as an active student and pay all fees according to the seminary fee schedule.

F. Registration after Course Work (Revision date: 3/14/2008)

Students who are on active status but not enrolled in required course work for credit and who have not passed the oral comprehensive examination must register each semester for RDOC9010 Program Proficiency. Students who have passed the oral comprehensive examination must register each semester for XXWC9600 Writing Candidate until submission of the dissertation for graduation. Both program proficiency and writing candidate are charged the current cap as appears in the *Graduate Catalog*.

G. Program Length and Time Requirements (Revision date: 7/5/02)

1. Program Time Limits

Research doctoral degree programs demand a minimum of three and one-half years of full-time study. All work for the degree must be completed within a period of seven years from the date of initial registration.

2. Weekly Time Requirements

Although there is no set amount of time required for research, a general guide is that students need to allocate about twenty hours of research time per week for each seminar. Thus, students taking a full load (two seminars and one supervised reading colloquium) should plan to be engaged in research a minimum of forty hours per week.

The course load (for research and seminar meetings) of students who are not able to allocate the necessary time on campus is subject to review by the guidance committee. The committee might recommend or require a reduced course load.

H. Time Extension for Graduation (Revision date: 7/5/02)

The period allowed for the completion of the degree program is seven years from the time of the initial registration. An extension of time may be considered in the case of extenuating circumstances which would result in the submission of the dissertation after the deadline for graduation in the final semester of a student's program. For a student to be eligible for an extension, the guidance committee must conclude that work on the dissertation has been substantial and that the document will be in acceptable form for evaluation by the deadline in the following semester. Extensions normally are limited to one additional semester to complete doctoral work.

A request for an extension of time for graduation must be submitted in writing by the student to the guidance committee chairperson prior to the end of the last semester. The request should contain the rationale and extenuating circumstances for the request.

The guidance committee will make an assessment of progress on the dissertation to verify that it is substantially complete and has the potential to be in acceptable form for final evaluation by the submission deadline in the next semester. Normally students are required to meet with the committee and bring documentation (such as pages written) of work completed.

After a thorough assessment, the committee will make a recommendation about the request for an extension. The chairperson will forward a copy of the student's request along with the guidance committee recommendation to the Associate Dean. A final decision will be made by ReDOC. The Associate Dean will notify the student of the final decision.

I. Fees (Revision date: 8/5/14)

The fee schedule is printed in the current *Graduate Catalog* and is subject to change without prior notice. Inconsistent payment of fees may jeopardize continuation in the doctoral program. Students should give careful attention to keeping accounts current.

J. Transfer of Credit for Courses Taken at Other Institutions (Revision date: 8/5/14)**1. General Criteria**

ReDOC will consider accepting a maximum of 8 hours of work from another institution toward a student's Ph.D. program, providing that the work done (1) is eligible for credit in a research doctoral program in the institution in which the credit is offered or (2) is eligible for credit in an advanced program primarily oriented toward theological research and writing. Such institution must be accredited by the Association of Theological Schools or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and/or a regional accrediting agency (such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools).

2. Courses Taken Prior to Entrance into the PhD Program

To request credit for courses completed prior to entrance into the doctoral program at NOBTS, a student should submit a written request and description of the courses (preferably syllabi) with the application to the doctoral program. The division of study will make a recommendation to the Doctoral Admissions Committee regarding number of hours to be transferred and how the credit would be applied (major, minor, or elective). If the student is accepted into the doctoral program, the Associate Dean will notify the student in the acceptance letter regarding the request for transfer of courses.

The course will be transferred to the student's transcript during his or her first semester in the program. The transfer will not limit the student from taking the maximum allowable load during the semester of the transfer.

3. Courses Taken During the PhD Program

A student who has completed at least two seminars in the major field may request permission to take a maximum of 8 semester hours at the doctoral level at another accredited institution to be applied toward the degree requirements at NOBTS. In order for credit for courses taken during the doctoral program at NOBTS to be considered, a student should work with his or her faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson to make a proposal to the division. If the division approves, the proposal should be forwarded to ReDOC before the course is taken.

The proposal should include the following:

- a. Appropriate information about the course (course description, syllabus, assignments, etc.)
- b. A request as to how the credit will be applied (major, minor, or elective)
- c. A rationale for the proposal (how it would enhance the student's doctoral program)
- d. Verification that the course fits the general criteria noted above

The proposal would need the recommendation of the student's faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson and the approval of the division, and it should be submitted to ReDOC by November 1 for the following spring semester or April 1 for the following summer or fall semester. The approval of ReDOC must occur prior to the student's taking the course.

The Associate Dean will notify the student in writing regarding the final decision by ReDOC. Before credit is given, the ReDOC office must be notified of the completion of the course and an official transcript must be received.

K. Withdrawal from the Program (Revision date: 3/16/06)

1. A student desiring to withdraw from a research doctoral program first should seek counsel from the faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson. Circumstances may warrant a request for inactive status. Other factors may necessitate complete withdrawal.
2. Request for withdrawal should be submitted in writing to the faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson.

The faculty advisor or the guidance committee chairperson, in consultation with the other member of the committee, will forward a request to the Associate Dean, who will notify ReDOC and the Registrar of the withdrawal. The student's program will cease, and the guidance committee will be vacated. The Associate Dean will send the student a letter confirming the withdrawal.

L. Termination of Doctoral Program (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Termination of a doctoral program may result from

- Failure to maintain proper grade point average
- Failure to register and pay fees
- Failure to be actively engaged in doctoral work
- Failure to obtain guidance committee approval of the prospectus by the last day of the 12th consecutive semester in the program
- Failure to pass the qualifying examination on the first attempt
- Failure to pass the oral comprehensive examination on the first attempt
- Failure to pass the oral defense of the dissertation on the first attempt
- Failure to make satisfactory progress in the program
- Failure to maintain ethical standards of the seminary (including plagiarism)
- Separation or divorce
- A grade of “C” in one course/seminar
- Failure to attain candidacy by the last day of the 11th consecutive semester in the program

Normally, a recommendation for termination of the doctoral program will be initiated by the faculty advisor or guidance committee. The division chair and faculty advisor or guidance committee chair will meet with the student for evaluation of the student's continued participation in the program and then make a recommendation to the division. The division chair will forward the division's recommendation to the Associate Dean for ReDOC consideration. A recommendation that the student continue in the program should include stipulations for continuance, if any. In the event that the recommendation is to discontinue, the Associate Dean will seek input from the student to present with the recommendation to ReDOC. ReDOC will make the final decision, and the Associate Dean will notify the student in writing.

Automatic termination of a doctoral program will result from

- Failure to pass the qualifying examination on a second attempt
- Failure to pass the oral comprehensive examination on a second attempt
- Failure to pass the oral defense of the dissertation on a second attempt
- A grade of “C” in two courses/seminars

M. Readmission to the Program (Revision date: 3/2/07)

1. A student whose doctoral program has ended and who desires to resume doctoral studies must submit a new application and complete the admission process. Any new admission requirements instituted since the original enrollment must be fulfilled. At least one year must elapse between termination and readmission. An

application will not be accepted from an applicant whose doctoral program was terminated at the initiative of the institution and who subsequently was denied readmission to the program.

2. In the interview with the faculty of the academic division of the major field of study, the applicant will be questioned concerning the circumstances of withdrawal/termination, the desire for readmission and continuation, the academic pursuits during the period of absence, and other pertinent information necessary in determining the acceptability of the student for readmission.
3. Depending upon the length of time since withdrawal/termination and other factors considered in the interview, the division may make one of the following recommendations:
 - a. Admission at the status achieved prior to withdrawal
 - b. Admission with the recommendation that additional seminars, the qualifying examination, and/or other degree requirements be completed
 - c. Admission to the program without credit for previous work
 - d. Recommendation against readmission
4. The final decision concerning the recommendation will be determined by the Doctoral Admissions Committee. The Associate Dean will inform the applicant of the decision.

N. Change of Major (Revision date: 7/8/02)

1. Intra-division change of major
 - a. A student desiring an intra-division change of major first must consult the faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson.
 - b. Prerequisites for admission into the new major field must have been completed before a change can be considered.
 - c. A written request must be submitted to the division chairperson outlining the desired major field change and the rationale. The division chairperson will consult with the Associate Dean concerning the availability of vacancies for doctoral work in the proposed major.
 - d. The division chairperson will bring the request before the division for evaluation and recommendations. The student must complete an entrance examination in the proposed major and may be required to appear before the division for an interview concerning the desired change.

- e. The division will evaluate previous master's-level and seminar work. In addition to approving or disapproving the change of major, the division may make recommendations concerning the student's preparation for entering the new major field and the acceptability of previous seminar work toward the degree requirements.
 - f. The former major field may function as the minor, and any seminars taken previously in the new major field may be applied toward the fulfillment of the degree requirements. The division will make the final decision in this regard.
 - g. Recommendations of the division will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for presentation to ReDOC, which will make the final decision.
 - h. A new faculty advisor or guidance committee will be appointed by the Associate Dean in consultation with the division chairperson.
2. Inter-division change of major
- a. A student desiring an inter-division change of major first must consult the faculty advisor or guidance committee chairperson.
 - b. Prerequisites for admission into the new major field must have been completed before a change can be considered.
 - c. A written request for a change of major shall be presented to the Associate Dean, who will inform the new division chairperson of the request. The letter should include the rationale for the proposed change, the proposed change of major, and the intended change of minor field.
 - d. The Associate Dean will confirm with the new division chairperson the availability of vacancies for doctoral work in the proposed major.
 - e. The division will evaluate previous master's-level and seminar work. In addition to considering the request for a change of major, the division may make recommendations concerning the student's preparation for entering the new major field and the acceptability of previous seminar work toward the degree requirements. The student must complete an entrance examination in the proposed major and the division interview portion of the admission procedures.
 - f. The former major field may function as the minor, and any seminars taken previously in the new major field may or may not be applied toward the fulfillment of the degree requirements.

- g. Recommendations of the division will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for presentation to ReDOC, which will make the final decision.
- h. The Associate Dean will inform the student of the decision in writing.
- i. A new faculty advisor or guidance committee will be appointed by the Associate Dean in consultation with the division chairperson.

O. Change of Minor (7/5/02)

A student desiring a change of minor should notify the Office of Research Doctoral Programs.

III. PROGRAM COMPONENTS: RESIDENCY/Th.M. CANDIDACY, SENIOR RESIDENCY, AND CANDIDACY

Research doctoral programs offered at NOBTS follow a curriculum which utilizes seminars or other class work, supervised reading colloquia, a variety of examinations, and the development of an acceptable dissertation. Adequate preparation for and superior performance on the course work and examinations are mandatory for continuance to the next stage of the student's program.

Two major comprehensive examinations, the qualifying examination and the oral comprehensive examination, comprise major elements and delineate milestones in the programs.

The course work, the examinations, and the dissertation are structured to lead to the completion of the three major components of the doctoral program: residency/Th.M. candidacy, senior residency, and candidacy.

A. Program Stages (Revision date: 3/8/07)

The Ph.D. program has three stages:

1. Residency/
Th.M. candidacy: Successful completion of five seminars, three supervised reading colloquia, and a qualifying examination
2. Senior residency: Successful completion of three additional seminars, one additional supervised reading colloquium, and an oral comprehensive examination
3. Candidacy: Dissertation research and writing

B. Seminar Structure (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Seminars generally are offered on the following schedules:

1. Fifteen or sixteen weekly 2.5-hour sessions
2. Eight 5-hour biweekly sessions
3. Four 7-hour monthly sessions
4. Three 11-hour sessions

Classroom time in seminars not meeting weekly normally is supplemented with between-session online interaction.

The weekly meeting time is established by the professor in consultation with the Office of Research Doctoral Programs. Adjustments to the schedule may be made by the professor in consultation with the members of the seminar, in which case the professor should advise the Office of Research Doctoral Programs, who will inform the Graduate Dean and the Registrar concerning the schedule revision.

Seminars and seminar requirements are structured by the professor leading the seminar.

A student may take no more than two seminars each semester.

C. Seminar Attendance (Revision date: 4/23/10)

Students enrolled in seminars are expected to attend every meeting of the seminar and to be prepared for participation in the discussion. Missing a seminar meeting may result in a failing grade or withdrawal from the seminar. If an emergency situation arises, the student should contact the professor immediately to discuss options. The professor should communicate the request to the ReDOC office.

If the student is allowed to continue in the seminar, additional work should be assigned to compensate for the absence. **Repeated absences in multiple seminars may be grounds for dismissal from the program.**

D. Seminar Examinations (Revision date: 9/22/99)

Seminar examinations, when given, generally are administered during the final week of the semester. Variations are allowable if the professor deems necessary.

E. Seminar Evaluation and Grades (Revision date: 3/8/07)

1. Periodic Evaluation

The professor will provide the student with verbal and/or written periodic evaluation regarding individual performance in the seminar. Attention will be given to total seminar participation, including the caliber of oral and written presentations and the quality of interaction with the professor and seminar colleagues. This evaluation may take place in the seminar meeting or in an individual session with the professor.

2. Seminar Grades

Students are evaluated in seminar work according to the following scale:

- A - Excellent achievement
- B - Quality achievement
- C - Inadequate achievement

A student must maintain a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. No seminar grade below "B" will count toward degree requirements. Thus, a student making a grade of "C" must take an additional seminar or course.

If a student makes a grade of "C" in a course or seminar, the division chair and faculty advisor or guidance committee chair will meet with the student for evaluation of the student's continued participation in the program. Either of the following may be recommended:

- The student may be allowed to continue in the program the next semester.
- The student may be dismissed from the program.

The division chair and faculty advisor or guidance committee chair will make a recommendation to the division. The division chair will forward the division's recommendation to the Associate Dean for ReDOC consideration. A recommendation that the student continue in the program should include stipulations for continuance, if any. In the event that the recommendation is to discontinue, the Associate Dean will seek input from the student to present with the recommendation to ReDOC. ReDOC will make the final decision, and the Associate Dean will notify the student in writing.

Two seminar or course grades of "C" will result in the automatic dismissal of the student from the doctoral program.

F. Introduction to Research and Writing (Revision date: 5/8/14)

The Introduction to Research and Writing course is offered as a colloquium that meets on three days prior to the beginning of each semester. The course is designed to introduce the student to the literature and techniques of doctoral research. Special attention will be given to the development of research proposals and the presentation of research, including individual guidance in the form and style of research writing. The student should register for the course during the first semester of doctoral work. This course is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

G. Advanced Clinical Supervision (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Psychology and counseling students must meet the equivalency for licensure as professional counselors and/or clinical membership in AAMFT before the oral defense of the dissertation. This includes a specified number of direct counseling hours required by the state of Louisiana, which must be completed with individual supervision. In order to facilitate this process, psychology and counseling students will be required to complete at least 2 semesters of PSYC9311 Advanced Clinical Supervision during the first year in the program. Applicants should contact the Psychology and Counseling Office during the application process for information on prerequisites to the course and the application process for this course. The application process (2 to 3 months) needs to be completed before the semester begins.

Prerequisites: Obtain and submit copy of liability insurance; receive authorization from LPC Board of Louisiana to begin supervision. Students who do not plan to pursue licensure in Louisiana or already are licensed will need to discuss their options with the Director of Clinical Training of the Psychology and Counseling Department.

H. Supervised Reading Colloquia (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Four semesters of supervised reading colloquia are required for the Ph.D. degree program. These are guided reading studies that meet periodically throughout the year. The student must register for the appropriate supervised reading colloquium each semester according to the program requirements. At least two supervised reading colloquia must be completed prior to the qualifying examination, and the remainder must be completed prior to the oral comprehensive examination.

Supervised reading colloquia are assessed on a pass/fail basis.

I. Institutional Review Board (Revision date: 4/1/16)

Students and faculty whose research involves human subjects may require approval of the Institutional Review Board, which is a subcommittee of the Research Doctoral Oversight Committee. The IRB alone can approve research with minimal risk to subjects, while ReDOC approval is required for research with more than minimal risk.

The review process adheres to the following guidelines.

1. Scope

The IRB is responsible to review all research with human subjects conducted

- a. by NOBTS students, faculty, or employees
- b. with subjects who are NOBTS students, faculty, or employees
- c. with NOBTS equipment or facilities
- d. on property owned by NOBTS
- e. with data from persons related to NOBTS

Such research includes interviews, surveys and questionnaires, observation of behavior, and usage of information from private databases.

2. Educational Exemption

If research conducted by an individual or group for a class project or independent directed study (1) does not involve a vulnerable population such as children under 18 years of age, prisoners, handicapped, mentally disabled, or any other persons with limited autonomy; (2) involves minimal risk to participants; and (3) will be used for educational purposes only, not for publication, dissertation research, or presentation in settings other than the classroom, then IRB review is not required. The professor of the course is responsible for determining whether student research does or does not require IRB review. The professor should consult the IRB with questions regarding exemptions.

3. Research for Dissemination

IRB approval is required for research with human subjects that will be published or presented in settings outside the classroom.

a. Research for class or independent project

If research for a class or project conducted by NOBTS students, faculty, or staff falls into a category that requires IRB approval, the primary researcher will complete an IRB Review Request form from the Program Materials page of the Ph.D. area of the seminary Web site and submit the form to the ReDOC office no later than one month before approval is needed. The IRB will evaluate the research proposal in the following areas:

- (1) Respect for persons—Is participation voluntary with option to terminate at any point clearly stated? Is the research described fully in understand-

able terms with benefits and risks clearly stated? How will participants' identities be protected and results confidential so that results cannot be linked to individuals? If subjects include vulnerable populations with limited autonomy, how will their rights be protected?

- (2) Benefits vs. risks—How will the study benefit participants? What is the level of risk? How will benefits outweigh risks?
- (3) Justice—Are participants selected fairly? Are benefits and risks distributed equally among participants? Does the selection process depend on the purpose of the study rather than researcher bias?

b. Dissertation research

Research for dissertations, including pilot studies, that involves human participants is subject to IRB review. The student should submit the IRB Request Form and the items indicated below to the ReDOC office no later than one month prior to the ReDOC meeting at which the prospectus is to be considered. IRB approval is required before the guidance committee can approve the prospectus.

With the IRB Request Form, the student should submit a pdf of the prospectus, the survey instrument or other research tool, and the informed consent form (see Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 9th ed., p. 103 for an example).

Any changes in the project after approval by the IRB must be resubmitted for review by the IRB before approval is granted. IRB approval is granted for a maximum of two years and may be subject to review at any time during that period. The IRB must approve the research project BEFORE the researcher makes any contact with subjects.

Data collected before IRB approval cannot be used in the proposed research.

J. Qualifying Examination (Revision date: 8/5/14)

1. Prerequisites

Christian Education majors are eligible to take the qualifying examination at the end of their first year in the program, or upon completion of three seminars if for some reason the student took a part-time load. All other majors are eligible to take the qualifying examination after completing four to five seminars (at least two in the major field), two supervised reading colloquia, and applicable major requirements as follows:

- Students majoring in New Testament must have completed Advanced Greek Grammar and Textual Criticism of the Greek New Testament.
- Students majoring in evangelism who entered the Ph.D. program without a nonbiblical language must have completed the statistics requirement.

A student, in consultation with the faculty advisor, may choose to take a fifth seminar prior to the qualifying examination. No student may take a sixth seminar until satisfactory completion of the qualifying examination.

2. Schedule and Application

The qualifying examination is scheduled by the seminary and is offered twice a year, in January and August. The student should consult the *Graduate Catalog* for the specific dates. This written examination is given over a period of three days (three hours per day).

The semester prior to taking the qualifying examination, the student should submit the Application for Qualifying Examination or Oral Comprehensive Examination form to the faculty advisor for signature and then forward the application to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs. The form must be received by the Office of Research Doctoral Programs by November 1 for the January exam or April 1 for the August exam.

The Associate Dean will compile a list of all students to be given the qualifying examination and notify the appropriate faculty.

3. Development and Content

After the student is approved to take the qualifying examination, the faculty advisor will develop the examination in consultation with the other faculty members in the major department. The faculty advisor then will forward the examination to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs.

The qualifying examination addresses the overall major field. Since the exact nature of the examination varies, the student should consult with the faculty advisor regarding specifics and other areas (such as seminar or course work) to be included in the examination. Also, the student should inquire about materials to be brought to the examination, such as a Hebrew Old Testament or a Greek New Testament.

4. Evaluation

The examinations are evaluated by the faculty members in the major department, and the results are reported to the Associate Dean's office on the Qualifying Exam Report form with any additional recommendations. The faculty advisor should send the report form to the Associate Dean no later than noon of the Friday before the first week of the semester. The Associate Dean will advise the student in writing regarding the outcome of the examination, although the faculty advisor may do so orally prior to the written notification. The qualifying examination is graded on a pass/fail basis and carries one semester hour of credit upon successful completion.

A student who does not pass the qualifying examination may be given one additional opportunity upon the recommendation of the division and the approval of the Research Doctoral Oversight Committee (see Section II.L.). In the case of reexamination, the nature of the examination will be determined by the faculty members in the major department. A decision not to allow a retest or a second failure will result in the student's termination from the doctoral program.

Upon passing the qualifying examination, the student is admitted to the senior residency stage of the program. The Associate Dean, in consultation with the chair of the division, will assign the student a two-member guidance committee.

K. Directed Study (Revision date: 12/11/15)

1. Purpose

A directed study provides a unique opportunity for a student to work one-on-one with a professor. Directed studies enable a student (1) to engage in specialized research under a professor's supervision or (2) to cover an area not covered in the regular seminar offerings during a student's scheduled seminar work.

2. Student guidelines

- a. A student can take only one directed study during his or her program.
- b. A directed study cannot be taken until a student passes the qualifying examination.
- c. Directed studies should be designed for 4 hours credit.
- d. A normal course load would be 11 hours per semester (two 4-hour seminars and one 3-hour supervised reading colloquium). A directed study counts as one of the two seminars allowed in the semester.
- e. A student who has taken one or more directed studies because a scheduled seminar for which the student enrolled did not make may request permission to take one directed study of his or her choosing during the senior residency

stage of the program. The request for permission must be approved by the student's guidance committee and the Associate Dean before a directed study proposal can be submitted to ReDOC. Once permission is granted, the student must follow all normal procedures for approval of a directed study.

3. Proposal process

- a. The student should make a preliminary inquiry with a professor regarding the professor's availability and the proposed area of focus.
- b. Prior to preparing a formal proposal, the student will need to pick up a directed study information sheet from the Office of Research Doctoral Programs.
- c. The student should work with the professor to prepare and submit a proposal.
- d. Students whose directed study involves research with human subjects should review the guidelines in Section III.I. Institutional Review Board.
- e. The proposal must be approved by (1) the professor directing the study, (2) the student's guidance committee, and (3) ReDOC.
- f. Directed studies to be taken during a regular semester must be approved by ReDOC no later than the October or May meeting prior to registration. The proposal must be submitted to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs no later than one week before the ReDOC meeting.
- g. Directed studies to be taken in the summer must be approved no later than the March ReDOC meeting. The proposal must be submitted to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs no later than one week before the ReDOC meeting.

4. Content

- a. Directed studies should be designed to incorporate approximately 10 to 15 hours of work per week and must include regular meetings with the professor, the normal schedule being a weekly meeting of one hour (minimum of 16 hours).
- b. In most circumstances, directed studies should incorporate a paper suitable for presentation at an academic society or an article for publication in an academically oriented journal.

5. A proposal to ReDOC should include minimally the following:

- a. Title
- b. Description of the study
- c. Student learning outcomes
- d. Textbooks
- e. Requirements/assignments: reading, papers, projects, etc.

- f. Schedule of meetings with the professor and content for each meeting
- g. Evaluation procedure (grading)
- h. Bibliography

6. Regularly offered seminars normally are not to be taken as a directed study.

The purpose of the directed study is to pursue areas beyond the scope of regularly scheduled seminars.

7. Fees

Tuition for a directed study is the per credit hour fee (up to the cap) plus the independent study fee (in addition to the cap) as published in the current *Graduate Catalog*.

8. Summer directed study seminars

All directed study seminar work should be completed one week before the beginning of the fall semester.

L. Dissertation Research and Writing (Revision date: 8/5/14)

1. Purpose of the Dissertation

The dissertation is to be a research document in a candidate's major field containing no less than 25,000 nor more than 50,000 words. Exceptions must be authorized by the student's guidance committee.

The purpose of the dissertation is to show

- ability to do independent and original research in the field of the candidate's graduate study
- mastery of a research methodology or methodologies
- competency to report logically the research conducted
- expertise in presenting the research in correct grammar and acceptable style

2. Selection of a Topic

Since selecting a research topic for a dissertation can be a difficult task, a student is advised to begin searching for a topic upon entering the doctoral program. The student should have an inquisitive mind which will lead to original research and thought in the selection of a topic rather than expect the chairperson to provide the topic.

At all stages in selecting a dissertation topic, the student should stay in close contact with the chairperson, and ideas should be discussed regularly with the chairperson.

The research topic should be characterized by

- originality—the student studies a research problem in a new or substantially different way than prior approaches
- individuality—the student takes primary responsibility for conceiving, conducting, and reporting research
- proper methodology—the research is characterized by exactness and precision
- contribution to the academic discipline—the topic is of interest to the academic guild

In selecting a topic, the student should ask and answer questions such as

- Will this topic sustain my interest over an extended period of time?
- Are the requirements of research in my range of competence?
- Will the research demand that I acquire proficiency in some new area such as a new methodology, language skills, or statistics?
- Is the topic manageable in size?
- What has been done already in this area?
- Does this research have the potential of making a contribution such as uncovering new facts, suggesting relationships previously unrecognized, challenging or modifying existing truths, affording new insights, or suggesting new interpretations of known facts?
- Will the research demonstrate mastery of the subject?
- Will the research demonstrate mastery of an appropriate methodology?
- Is this research topic compatible with the degree?
- Is this research topic compatible with the major?
- Are sufficient materials available for doctoral research?

Ideas for a dissertation topic might be found in a variety of places, such as

- Research papers written in college or seminary
- Seminar papers
- Seminar discussions
- Attendance at professional meetings
- Reading done for the qualifying examination, the oral comprehensive examination, and seminar papers. Special attention should be given to footnotes, which often suggest possible topics and areas of needed work.
- Future research sections of dissertations

The student should examine carefully the subject in the appropriate reference works and dissertation abstracts before submitting the research proposal. Another search may be necessary prior to submitting the prospectus.

Note: when considering a topic related to the life or ministry of a living person, the student and guidance committee should exercise special care. Normally, a living person who is the subject of the dissertation should have made a significant contribution to the field, and there should be some sense of closure to that person's ministry or work on a given topic.

3. Approval of a Dissertation

Approval of a dissertation goes through several steps:

- a. The student and chairperson agree on an appropriate topic.
- b. The student prepares a research proposal that is submitted to the guidance committee and academic division for approval.
- c. In the course RDOC9303 Prospectus Development, the student begins the development of a prospectus.
- d. After passing the oral comprehensive examination, the candidate submits a prospectus to the guidance committee for preliminary review.
- e. If acceptable to the guidance committee, the revised prospectus is forwarded to ReDOC for review.
- f. The guidance committee works with the student to finalize the document.
- g. The candidate completes the dissertation and submits it to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs for evaluation by the Doctoral Form and Style Consultant and the guidance committee.
- h. The candidate schedules the oral defense of the dissertation with the guidance committee and successfully defends the dissertation.

M. Research Proposal (Revision date: 8/5/14)

The research proposal is the student's first formal proposal to the guidance committee regarding the dissertation topic. As such, the research proposal is a formal document with a title page. The student must have completed successfully the qualifying examination before this document can be submitted. Further, approval of the research proposal must be secured prior to scheduling the oral comprehensive examination. This document is normally 3-6 pages in length, not including bibliography.

1. Components of the Research Proposal

The research proposal should include the following components:

a. Research question

What research question will be answered because of this dissertation?

b. Thesis statement (research problem, purpose statement)

Set forth the goal of the research. This is the conceptual core of the dissertation. This is not the place to discuss methodology.

c. Hypothesis(es)

Give a statement of your research hypothesis. What do you expect to discover?

d. Literature search

The purpose of the search is to demonstrate the uniqueness of the dissertation research.

e. Importance of the study

Include a description of the importance of the proposal. What will this research contribute to the academic discipline?

f. Methodology

Give a brief description of the methodology to be employed. Discuss the data needed and how they will be interpreted. Identify key issues that are relevant to the research methodology.

g. Competence of the researcher

Describe particular skills and competencies necessary for successful completion of the study. If the researcher does not have the needed competencies, he or she should describe how and when the competencies will be gained.

h. Initial bibliography

The initial bibliography should include key works that have been examined and indicate awareness of major works in the field of inquiry.

2. Suggested Resources

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3d ed.

Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne F. Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 9th ed.

John D. Cone and Sharon L. Foster, *Dissertations and Theses from Start to Finish*, 2d ed.

Fred Pyrczak and Randall R. Bruce, *Writing Empirical Research Reports*, 5th ed.

3. Approval of Research Proposal

The student should submit four copies of the research proposal to the guidance committee chairperson by November 1 for the January Prospectus Development course and April 1 for the summer course. The guidance committee will review the research proposal for initial approval. The chairperson will enlist two additional readers from the academic division to evaluate the research proposal. Final approval of the research proposal will be given by these four persons. Major changes in the direction of the dissertation after the research proposal has been approved will require resubmission to the guidance committee and division for approval according to the above procedure.

A ReDOC Research Proposal Evaluation Guide is available in the Office of Research Doctoral Programs and on the Research Doctoral area of the seminary Web site. Not all committees will use this form, but all will be evaluating the research proposal according to the criteria indicated. Students are advised to evaluate their work carefully in all of these areas prior to submission of the research proposal to the guidance committee.

4. Report of Decision

When a decision is made, the guidance committee chairperson should complete the Research Proposal Report form and submit it to the Associate Dean. If the research proposal is approved, two copies of the final approved proposal should be submitted to the Associate Dean with the report form.

The Office of Research Doctoral Programs must receive the Research Proposal Report and copies of the approved proposal by the last day of the semester for the student to be included in the subsequent Prospectus Development course. Decisions other than approval also should be forwarded to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs by the last day of the semester.

N. Prospectus Development Course (Revision date: 7/3/03)

The Prospectus Development course is offered during January and summer doctoral miniterms. To be eligible for this course, a student must have passed the qualifying examination and have a research proposal approved by the academic division, as described above. Students who submit a research proposal by the November 1 or April 1 deadline should register for the course during online registration. If the division does not approve the research proposal, the student will be dropped from the course without penalty.

In this course, the student will be concerned primarily with producing a defensible prospectus for the dissertation. The course is graded on a pass/fail basis.

Prior to the course, the professor will send each student a syllabus listing assignments to be completed before the course. In order for the student to make the best use of time in the course and to prepare an acceptable prospectus, it is crucial that extensive work be done prior to the course as described in the syllabus.

The student is **not** allowed to present a prospectus to the guidance committee before satisfactory completion of this course.

O. Teaching in Higher Education (Revision date: 3/16/15)

The Teaching in Higher Education course is offered in a colloquium format during January and summer miniterms with post-assignments continuing through the semester. The course is designed to enhance the teaching skills of research doctoral students anticipating teaching roles in college, seminary, and church settings. Activities include readings and discussion in educational theory and the development of a course of study for evaluation. The course is required of all Ph.D. students and must be completed

successfully before taking the oral comprehensive examination. Students should register for the course during the research doctoral online registration.

Candidates for the Ph.D. degree who have a master's degree in education or Christian education that includes course work in teaching methods and learning theory **and** who have a minimum of five years teaching experience at the college level may request exemption from Teaching in Higher Education.

- a. The student should make the request in writing to the Associate Dean. A transcript of the master's work, if it is not on file in the Registrar's Office, and a letter from an appropriate academic officer validating and evaluating the teaching experience must be included with the request.
- b. The Associate Dean, in consultation with ReDOC and faculty teaching the course, will evaluate the request and supporting documentation. The final decision will be made by ReDOC.
- c. The student will be notified, in writing, of the decision. A copy of the request and decision will be sent to the Registrar. If approved, three hours credit for the course will be posted to the NOBTS transcript.

P. Licensure (Psychology and Counseling) (Revision date: 7/5/02)

Students must meet the equivalency for licensure according to the LPC Board of Louisiana as professional counselors and/or clinical membership in AAMFT before the oral defense of the dissertation.

The student should obtain the LPC/AAMFT Equivalency Evaluation Form from the department office and submit it to the guidance committee chairperson for committee confirmation no later than two weeks prior to the oral defense of the dissertation. The chairperson will forward the approved form to the Associate Dean no later than one week before the oral defense of the dissertation. The Associate Dean will notify the student in writing and send copies of the letter to the guidance committee chairperson, division chairperson, and Registrar.

Q. Oral Comprehensive Examination (Revision date: 8/5/14)

The oral comprehensive examination is a two-hour examination scheduled after all seminars, supervised reading colloquia, and any other required courses have been completed and a satisfactory research proposal has been approved by the division.

New Testament and Old Testament majors must have completed the second nonbiblical language requirement. Verification must be received by the Office of Research Doctoral Programs no later than two weeks before the exam.

1. Schedule and Application

When ready to take the oral comprehensive examination, the student should submit the completed Application for Qualifying Examination or Oral Comprehensive Examination form (obtained in the Office of Research Doctoral Programs or online) to the guidance committee chairperson for signature and forward the application to the Associate Dean at least two weeks before the examination. After the application has been approved by the Associate Dean, the guidance committee chairperson will schedule the examination with the other member of the guidance committee and the student. Although the examination is conducted by the guidance committee, the examination is open to the faculty. The location of the examination is arranged by the chairperson, who is then responsible to communicate both the exact time and place to the student, the other member of the guidance committee, the division chairperson, and the Associate Dean.

2. Development and Content

In consultation with the other member of the guidance committee and other faculty as necessary, the chairperson will develop and lead the oral comprehensive examination. In general, the examination addresses the content of all course work in both major and minor fields and related background material as deemed appropriate by the guidance committee. The content of the oral comprehensive examination varies somewhat among the various areas of study; thus, the student should consult the guidance committee chairperson concerning preparation for the examination and materials to be brought to the examination.

3. Evaluation

The examination is evaluated by the guidance committee immediately following the two hours of testing. The evaluation is based on the student's overall knowledge of the field with respect to both breadth and accuracy; ability to maintain engaging dialogue on themes in the field; proficiency in communicating logically and clearly; and an understanding of major and divergent theories, developments, or methods in the field.

The chairperson will communicate the outcome of the examination to the student in the presence of the other member of the guidance committee immediately following the examination and a brief period of reflection by the guidance committee. The results of the examination are reported by the chairperson to the

Associate Dean on the Oral Comprehensive Examination Report form. The Associate Dean will confirm the results of the examination to the student in writing and send a copy of the letter to the division chairperson, guidance committee, and Registrar. The examination is graded on a pass/fail basis and carries one semester hour of credit upon successful completion.

A student who does not pass the oral comprehensive examination may be given one additional opportunity upon the recommendation of the guidance committee and division of study and the approval of the Research Doctoral Oversight Committee (see Section II.L.). A second failure will result in the student's termination from the doctoral program.

Upon passing the oral comprehensive examination, the student is admitted to the candidacy stage of the program.

After the student passes the oral comprehensive examination, the student must maintain enrollment by registering for dissertation writing for the remainder of the program.

Failure to attain candidacy by the last day of the 11th consecutive active semester of the doctoral program is grounds for review and termination of the student's program.

R. Prospectus (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Guidance for the preparation of the prospectus is given in the Prospectus Development course. Upon passing the oral comprehensive examination, the candidate may officially submit the prospectus to the guidance committee. Two copies should be submitted to the chairperson. The guidance committee will review the document and request and secure appropriate revisions in preparation for ReDOC review.

The student may present the prospectus to the guidance committee prior to the oral comprehensive examination. However, the committee may not review the prospectus until after the examination is passed. The guidance committee may accept the prospectus for review immediately after the examination, provided the student passes the examination. Evaluation of the prospectus is not part of the oral comprehensive examination.

After the guidance committee's satisfactory preliminary review of the prospectus, the student should submit 9 corrected copies of the prospectus to the Associate Dean for review by ReDOC. The copies are due to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs no later than one week before the ReDOC meeting.

1. Components of the Prospectus

a. Thesis (problem statement, purpose)

Give a clear statement of what the researcher seeks to accomplish—the goal of the research effort. Address questions such as What will the researcher discover? What will the research demonstrate? Behind the thesis statement there should be a research question (either stated or implied). The readers should read this section and know the basic thrust of the research proposal. The thesis should have some element of “interpretation” and discovery of something “new.”

Some students divide the thesis or problem into subproblems, but this is not required or even appropriate for all dissertations. When done, subproblems should be research units (including interpretation of data)

b. Hypothesis or hypotheses

A hypothesis is a conjectural supposition of what the researcher expects to discover. There is no set number (or required set correlation to sub-problems when used). With empirical research these should be measurable; with some other forms of research they should be discoverable.

c. Thesis Setting (or Problem Setting)

Students should consider including some or all of the following:

- (1) Assumptions—underlying self-evident assumptions undergirding the research proposal (these look to the present, not the future)
- (2) Delimitations—circumscriptions placed on the study to eliminate ambiguity and to exclude certain inferred items one does not intend to be in the study.
- (3) Definitions of terms—key terms related to the proposal are defined. These are generally operable definitions, with some definitions possibly taken from the professional literature.

d. The State of Research (or Review of Related Literature)

This section should have an introduction that overviews the approach of the review and the structure of the review. A review of literature should focus on presenting a coherent argument that leads to a description of the study. At the

end of the section, the reader should be able to conclude that there is the need for another study—the proposed dissertation.

For most entries the following should be included:

- (1) Description of the research methodology (type of research, description of sample population, etc.)
- (2) Summary of the conclusions asserted
- (3) Analysis and evaluation of the contribution of this research to the field

The review normally begins with the more general works and moves toward the more specific.

e. The Importance of the Study

The focus of this section should be the contribution of the research to the academic discipline. This section should logically be related to and emerge out of the review of literature.

f. Research Methodology

This section should be “customized” for each dissertation. There is no one outline. Each methodology should dictate its own outline.

The kind of items that need to be addressed in this section are

- (1) Identification of the primary data and possibly key secondary data
- (2) Criteria for admissibility of the data
- (3) Where the data are located
- (4) How the data will be secured
- (5) How the data will be interpreted [statistical procedures generate data but do not interpret them]

Students consider all of the above items, but they should write the methodology section (narrative, not “fill in the blank”) specific to the methodology used, focusing on the above items as appropriate.

A key word is *replication*. A researcher in the field should be able to read this section and replicate the research. Thus this section should be a detailed blueprint.

The length of this section will vary considerably, depending on the particular dissertation.

An outline used by many in the social sciences (descriptive survey and experimental research) is the following:

- (1) Subjects—discussion of the identity and selection of the subjects
- (2) Measures—discussion of various instruments to be used. For a dissertation all instruments must have (a) validity and (b) reliability. These must be documented or the researcher must present a plan to demonstrate them. Without validity and reliability, the research is not valid for a dissertation.
- (3) Procedure—detailed outline of all procedures, such as distribution of surveys, assignment of random numbers, division of experimental and control groups, outlines of experimental treatments, etc.
- (4) Data analysis—What will be done with the data generated by the statistics? How will it be presented? What will the researcher be looking for in interpretation?

Students whose research involves human subjects must follow the Institutional Review Board procedure outlined in III.I. Institutional Review Board.

Students planning to use psychological testing instruments must submit with the prospectus a Psychological Testing Application Form signed by the guidance committee supplying information regarding a licensed psychologist who has agreed to supervise the data collection and interpretation. Following ReDOC review, the prospectus and application form will be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies, who, in consultation with the psychology and counseling faculty, will make the final decision. The Associate Dean will notify the student of the decision in writing.

Upon completion of the research, the student must submit to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs the Psychological Testing Supervisor Verification Form completed by the supervising psychologist.

g. Qualifications of the Researcher

This section should focus on the student documenting that he or she has the specific qualifications needed for the proposed research. This not a resume.

h. Proposed Outline of the Dissertation

i. Selected Bibliography

2. ReDOC Review of the Prospectus

The guidance committee chairperson will attend the ReDOC review, which will focus on feedback, dialogue, and understanding. ReDOC will submit a report to the guidance committee chairperson.

3. Guidance Committee Approval of the Prospectus

An approved prospectus functions as a covenant between the candidate and the faculty. The candidate is assured that a satisfactory dissertation which follows the content and methodology of the prospectus, represents valid interpretation of data, and is written in acceptable style and form will be accepted by the faculty.

Once a prospectus has been approved by the guidance committee, a candidate may not change any word of the dissertation title nor make major changes in the outline or methodology without permission from the guidance committee. The chairperson may give permission to make minor changes.

The guidance committee will receive the ReDOC report and work with the student to finalize the document as deemed appropriate. The guidance committee will grant final approval or rejection of the prospectus. When the prospectus is approved, the guidance committee chairperson will submit the following to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs: (1) a Prospectus Approval Report form, (2) a copy of the approved prospectus, and (3) a brief report on the committee's response to the ReDOC review.

When the prospectus is approved, the student will be given authorization to proceed with the dissertation. Notification will be made to the student by the Associate Dean.

No research with human subjects may be done until the student receives notification from the Associate Dean that the guidance committee has approved the prospectus, which requires prior approval from the Institutional Review Board.

4. Prospectus Approval Deadline

A student must have a prospectus approved by the guidance committee no later than the last day of the student's 12th consecutive semester in the program, although approval should be sought as soon as possible to allow adequate time for research and writing. Failure to meet this deadline is grounds for review and termination of the student's program.

S. Guidance Committee Assistance during Research and Writing (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Throughout the research and writing process, students should work closely with the chairperson. Minimally, students should report to the chairperson regarding progress on the dissertation at least once each month. Any exception must be approved by the student's guidance committee.

T. Proofreading/Typing (Revision date: 9/22/99)

The candidate should submit a dissertation to the faculty that is as free as possible from errors. The dissertation should represent the candidate's ability to do research and produce a work of good literary quality. Prior to submission of the dissertation, the candidate should proofread and edit the text regarding typing, form, style, clarity, content, and logic. The writing of a dissertation is a scholarly discipline and should be the work of the candidate in all respects.

A typist may be enlisted; however, the typist should not edit, correct, or rewrite any portion of the dissertation. The typist should be given a final copy of the text which indicates clearly the way the candidate desires it to be typed, including form. The candidate is responsible for making decisions regarding form and style.

A proofreader may be enlisted; however, the role of the proofreader should be limited to indicating typographical errors, incorrect form, incorrect grammar, and poor style. The proofreader should not function as an editor, rewriting sentences or paragraphs. A candidate is not allowed to enlist or hire one who is an "expert in writing" to edit (rewrite, restyle, or refine) the text. Since the dissertation is part of the academic requirements leading to a doctoral degree, a candidate should present the best finished product of which he or she is capable.

The candidate should assume all responsibility for the final product. A candidate should be prepared to certify that the dissertation represents his or her own work in every aspect, except for guidance given by or authorized by the guidance committee.

U. Doctoral Form and Style Consultant Dissertation Chapter Review (Revision date: 7/8/02)

Before the dissertation is submitted, one chapter (other than the introduction) of the dissertation can be reviewed and approved by the Doctoral Form and Style Consultant. The review is optional at the discretion of the student or guidance committee chairperson, but it should be completed at least one month before submission of the dissertation. The student should contact the consultant at least two months before planning to present the chapter for review, as review slots are scheduled on a first- come-first-served basis. The

review slot should be treated as a deadline; if the chapter is submitted after the scheduled date, there is no guarantee that the material can be reviewed for the upcoming dissertation deadline. The chapter should be in final form, with no known errors. A chapter can be submitted for review only one time.

The consultant will review the chapter and mark the copy noting typographical errors, grammatical errors, and problems related to the appropriate style guide and NOBTS form and style preferences. The marked copy will be returned to the student along with a Form and Style Assessment Report indicating kinds of errors noted. The student should incorporate suggestions into the chapter and the remainder of the dissertation. Turnaround time is scheduled for three days. The consultant may require a meeting with the student.

A copy of the Form and Style Assessment Report is provided to the guidance committee. The chairperson will discuss the report with the student if necessary. A copy of the report also will be filed in the Office of Research Doctoral Programs.

V. Submission of the Dissertation for Defense (Revision date: 9/29/16)

At least four months must elapse between guidance committee approval of the prospectus and submission of the dissertation for defense. The student should contact the Doctoral Form and Style Consultant to confirm the anticipated submission date at least one month before submission.

The student or the guidance committee may wish to request an external reader as the third faculty reader. An external reader must (1) hold an earned Ph.D. in the field and (2) teach in an academic institution, be active in professional societies, or have made a significant contribution to the field. An external reader needs the approval of the guidance committee, division of study, and Associate Dean.

A student who wishes to request an external reader should submit a request to the chairperson of the guidance committee, who will forward the request to the chair of the division for division consideration. No later than the September 1 or February 1 preceding submission of the dissertation, the division must forward their recommendation to the Associate Dean for final approval.

A student may contact the proposed external reader informally, but a formal invitation must be issued by the Associate Dean, who will notify the division chair, guidance committee chair, and student of the response.

Four plain-paper copies of the completed dissertation (in four separate boxes) must be submitted unbound to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs by the October 1 or March 1 deadline. The Dissertation Fee and Order Form and appropriate payment should

accompany the dissertation copies. The student will receive confirmation of the submission.

Copies of the dissertation will be forwarded to the guidance committee and the Doctoral Form and Style Consultant if dissertation and diploma fees have been paid. The consultant will do the following:

1. Check to be sure items indicated in the chapter review have been corrected.
2. Review and mark the dissertation copy noting typographical errors, grammatical errors, and problems related to the appropriate style guide and NOBTS form and style preferences.
3. Provide a Form and Style Assessment Report to the guidance committee and to the student, if the guidance committee permits.

Within two weeks, the guidance committee will make a preliminary assessment of the dissertation, considering content as well as the consultant's Form and Style Assessment Report, to determine whether a defense will be allowed. The guidance committee should indicate their decision on the Dissertation Defense Agreement form and forward it to the Associate Dean no later than the October 15 or March 15 following submission of the dissertation. Defenses should be held within the next four weeks.

If a defense is not allowed, the submission will count as a failure. The guidance committee chairperson should report the failure to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs on the Report of Dissertation Defense form.

W. Oral Defense of the Dissertation (Revision date: 7/15/02)

Once the dissertation has been submitted to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs and the guidance committee has decided to allow a defense, the Associate Dean, in consultation with the division chairperson, will forward a copy of the dissertation to the external reader or assign a faculty reader (third member of the committee) and notify the student and guidance committee chairperson. At that time the candidate should take the initiative to contact the guidance committee chairperson to arrange the oral defense of the dissertation.

The chairperson should notify the Office of Research Doctoral Programs of the date, time, and location of the defense when it is scheduled. The oral defense of the dissertation should occur prior to November 15 or April 15.

No later than two weeks prior to the oral defense of the dissertation, an approved LPC/AAMFT Licensure Report Form for psychology and counseling majors must be forwarded by the guidance committee chairperson to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs. Without proof of licensure/equivalency, the oral defense cannot be conducted.

The oral defense of the dissertation is two hours in duration and deals with the dissertation and related subject matter. The defense is conducted by the guidance committee; however, any faculty member may attend. An external reader has the option of attending the defense or submitting a narrative evaluation of the document.

X. Dissertation Evaluation (Revision date: 7/10/03)

1. Criteria for Evaluation

At the time of the oral defense of the dissertation, the evaluation of a dissertation generally is divided into two categories:

- Content—this includes such items as thoroughness of research, validity of interpretations, coherence of argument, overall quality of the document, and contribution to the field of study.
- Form and style—this includes such items as typing, grammar, writing style, quality of reproductions, and form.

2. Options

The guidance committee has three options regarding evaluation of the dissertation:

- a. Pass—based upon an acceptable defense and a dissertation that, as submitted, meets acceptable professional standards of publication
- b. Fail—the dissertation is not acceptable in content and/or form and style

Any one of the following requires that a guidance committee fail a dissertation:

- Inadequate oral defense of the dissertation
- Substantial weaknesses in content or form and style
- Failure to meet acceptable standards of publication in the field
- Changes requiring the rewriting or reprinting of substantial sections

In the case of rejection of the dissertation, the guidance committee may or may not decide to look with favor upon its resubmission. If a resubmission is allowed, a period of three months must elapse before it may be presented again. Another oral defense of the dissertation may or may not be required.

- c. Fail with Program Continuance option

A student whose dissertation defense is satisfactory but whose dissertation does not pass for minor content and/or form and style reasons may, with the approval of the guidance committee, be allowed to register for RDOC9000 Program Continuance the following semester while making corrections to the dissertation (if the student is not out of time). Tuition for Program Continuance is a reduced fee (see the current *Graduate Catalog*).

In such a case:

- (1) The dissertation may be resubmitted to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs no sooner than two months after the dissertation defense and no later than two months prior to the following graduation date.
- (2) The guidance committee and the assigned dissertation reader will read the resubmitted dissertation and meet to make a final decision.
- (3) A second dissertation defense will not be required.

A student who does not meet the resubmission deadline and wants to continue in the program (provided time is left) will have to pay the full matriculation fee the following semester.

In the case of a resubmission, the guidance committee should not give the candidate a comprehensive list of corrections. Rather, the committee should give the candidate counsel and then expect the candidate to work through the dissertation to find and correct all problems of content, form, and style.

No more than one resubmission is allowed. A second failure of a dissertation results in automatic dismissal from the program.

Resubmission does not involve a commitment as to the time of graduation. If final presentation of the dissertation exceeds seven years after the initial registration for the degree and an extension of time is not granted, candidacy for the degree is forfeited.

3. Reporting

- a. If the guidance committee passes the dissertation, the chairperson should sign the Report of Dissertation Defense form, secure the signature of the other committee members and the division chairperson, and forward the form to the Associate Dean. After the Associate Dean signs the form, copies will be made for insertion into all copies of the dissertation.

The chairperson also should complete the Dissertation Review Report and forward the form to the Associate Dean.

- b. If the guidance committee fails the dissertation, the chairperson should complete the Dissertation Review Report, noting the outcome of the defense and option for resubmission, if any. The form should be forwarded to the Associate Dean, who will write the student confirming the committee's decision.

Y. Final Dissertation Submission (Revision date: 8/5/14)

Following a successful oral defense of the dissertation, the student will make any necessary corrections and submit the following to the guidance committee chairperson no later than three weeks prior to graduation:

1. Four required copies of the final corrected dissertation on white, 20 lb., 100% cotton paper, unbound, in four separate boxes (one copy will be returned to the candidate bound)
2. Additional personal copies for binding (in separate boxes) on white, 20 lb., 100% cotton paper (if request and payment were made upon initial submission of the dissertation)
3. The completed, signed Doctoral Dissertation Agreement Form (including the copyright authorization) at the back of the UMI Dissertation Services booklet *Publishing Your Dissertation*
4. Title page (plain-paper copy—to accompany UMI form)
5. Abstract (plain-paper copy—to accompany UMI form)

The chairperson verifies the corrections, completes the Guidance Committee Chairperson's Dissertation Checklist form, and forwards the materials to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs no later than two weeks prior to graduation. For details, students should consult the Graduation Checklist sheet from the Office of Research Doctoral Programs.

All personal bound copies of the dissertation will be shipped to the address indicated on the Dissertation Fee and Order Form. The dissertation fee also covers a circulation copy and a reference room copy of the dissertation for the library.

Z. Graduation (Revision date: 7/10/03)

1. Graduation Application

The student may submit the Application for Graduation upon submission of the dissertation (no later than October 1 or March 1).

Students applying to receive the Th.M. degree only must submit the Application for Graduation to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs by September 15 or February 15. Such students have the option of walking or not walking in the graduation ceremony.

2. Cap and Gown Order

The doctoral cap and gown should be ordered early in the student's anticipated final semester as a writing candidate. These may be ordered through the LifeWay Christian Store or another suitable supplier. Students desiring an alternative supplier should contact the Office of Research Doctoral Programs for the proper colors for gown trim, hood, and tassel.

3. Graduation Practice

Attendance is required at graduation practice, and students should bring their hoods to the Registrar's Office prior to practice.

4. Graduation Ceremony

Participation in graduation exercises is required of all students unless permission is granted to graduate in absentia. Requests for permission to graduate in absentia should be made in writing to the Registrar. Permission is granted only in the cases of extenuating circumstances or emergencies.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

A. Nondegree Students (Revision date: 12/3/15)

1. Students with a master's degree from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools or a regionally accredited graduate school may apply to take one doctoral seminar as a nondegree student.
2. An individual desiring nondegree status must make application as a nondegree student. Nondegree students may be admitted to one doctoral seminar provided they have met the following requirements:
 - a. A combined score of "0" or higher on the following five-point sliding scale that includes grade point average (GPA) and the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) verbal and analytical writing scores:

	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
GPA	below 3.0	3.0-3.25	3.26-3.5	3.51-3.75	3.76-4.0
GRE Verbal	below 400 or 146	400-490 146-152	500-540 153-156	550-610 157-160	above 610 or 160
GRE Writing	below 3.5	3.5	4.0	4.5-5.0	5.5-6.0

- b. The completion of all prerequisites for the seminar
 - c. Positive recommendation by the academic division in which the study is to be done
 - d. Final approval by the Research Doctoral Oversight Committee
3. Should a nondegree student who has successfully completed a doctoral seminar subsequently seek admission to a doctoral program, the seminary is under no obligation to accept the previous credit toward any doctoral program. Should a student seek such credit, a formal written request must be submitted to the Associate Dean with the application to the doctoral program. The division of study will make a recommendation to the Doctoral Admissions Committee regarding number of hours to be transferred and how the credit would be applied (major,

minor, or elective). If the student is accepted into the doctoral program, the Associate Dean will notify the student in the acceptance letter regarding the request for transfer of courses.

The course will be transferred to the student's transcript during his or her first semester in the program. The transfer will not limit the student from taking the maximum allowable load during the semester of the transfer.

B. Visiting Student (Revision date: 1/30/07)

1. A student who is enrolled in a doctoral program at another accredited seminary, college, or university may enroll in doctoral seminars for credit or audit at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary as a visiting student.
2. An individual desiring visiting student status must make application as a non-degree student and meet the following requirements:
 - a. Provide a letter to the Associate Dean stating the desire and rationale for doing seminar work at NOBTS
 - b. Provide a letter from the appropriate academic officer at the student's institution indicating approval to do seminar work at NOBTS
 - c. Complete all prerequisites for the seminar(s)
 - d. Secure a positive recommendation by the academic division in which the study is to be done
 - e. Secure final approval by the Research Doctoral Oversight Committee
3. The visiting student must pay the applicable matriculation and student fees at the level of doctoral students.

C. Visiting Scholar (Revision date: 3/8/07)

1. A professor who is employed at another accredited seminary, college, or university and who has attained the Ph.D. or Th.D., or the equivalent may apply to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for the status of visiting scholar.
2. An individual desiring visiting scholar status should submit a request to the Associate Dean. The Associate Dean will forward a copy of the request to the chairperson of the division in which the scholar wishes to pursue study. The division will consider the request and make a recommendation to ReDOC. The Associate Dean will inform the applicant of the committee's decision in writing and send copies of appropriate materials to the Registrar.

3. A visiting scholar may audit doctoral seminars and master's-level courses (with the permission of the professor) without the payment of fees.
4. A visiting scholar who desires credit for a seminar will need to register as a special student. The individual will be charged a matriculation fee equal to one-half of the normal semester cost for doctoral students.
5. A visiting scholar may apply for student housing through the normal channels of the Housing Office.

D. Library Policies (Revision date: 8/5/14)

All doctoral students should consult the Library Circulation Policies on the library area of the seminary Web site for details and regulations concerning such policies as maintaining carrels, checking out books, renewals, utilizing computer facilities, and interlibrary loans.

E. Library Carrels (Revision date: 7/10/03)

During their orientation session, new doctoral students may request assignment of a study carrel that may be retained throughout the duration of their doctoral studies. These carrels are assigned on a first-come-first-served basis. At times shared carrels may be necessary due to space limitations and the number of doctoral students making requests.

F. Teaching Assistants (Revision date: 8/5/14)

1. Faculty members may enlist a teaching assistant from among the available doctoral students for assistance in grading, teaching classes in the absence of the professor, researching various subjects, and performing other service functions.
2. Normally a faculty member will contact and request a student within the division and major field of study to function in this capacity. The faculty member will complete an employee authorization form for the division chair to sign and forward to the Graduate Dean for final approval and submission to the business office.
3. Teaching assistants are paid a modest stipend on a monthly basis (four months per semester) during the period of service.

On or before the first day worked, the student will need to complete the proper paperwork for payroll procedures through the seminary business office.

G. Southern Baptist Doctoral Teaching Fellowship (Revision date: 9/29/16)**1. Fellowship**

The Southern Baptist Doctoral Teaching Fellowship provides financial assistance and teaching opportunities to qualified doctoral students through funds generated by the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention. Students who qualify for the program are guaranteed at least one teaching opportunity during their doctoral studies. Remuneration will be based on the current seminary scale for adjunctive faculty. Once approved for the fellowship, continued participation past the initial semester will be based on the needs of the seminary and the interests of the student.

2. Eligibility

To be eligible for this fellowship a student must be currently enrolled in the Ph.D. program and must have completed the Teaching in Higher Education course or the seminary orientation for new adjunctive faculty prior to the beginning of the semester when the classes will be taught. Students who have completed the Th.M. degree will be eligible to teach either in Leavell College or the graduate program. Students who have not completed the Th.M. degree will be eligible to teach only in Leavell College. All requirements for adjunctive faculty, including adherence to the current Baptist Faith and Message and the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Articles of Religious Belief, apply to this fellowship.

3. Application Process

Interested students should submit a completed application form to the Office of Research Doctoral Programs. Application forms are available from this office or from the research doctoral area of the seminary Web site. Each application will be reviewed by the Associate Dean and the faculty of the appropriate major and voted on by the appropriate division. The Associate Dean will then forward the completed application with division recommendation to the appropriate Dean for approval by the Provost and President. Upon final approval of the application, the Associate Dean will assign a faculty mentor for the student. Normally this mentor will be the student's faculty advisor or chair of the student's guidance committee.

Although applications are accepted throughout the year, students should keep in mind that the process of scheduling teaching assignments begins in January. Applicants who are approved will be scheduled as teaching opportunities become available.

4. Implementation Process

Once the student has completed the Teaching in Higher Education course or seminary orientation for new adjunctive faculty, the faculty mentor will work with the student through the normal scheduling process for the graduate and undergraduate courses to find a teaching opportunity that meets the interests and abilities of the student and the needs of the seminary. Prior to the beginning of the semester in which the student will teach, a syllabus for the course and a textbooks requisition form must be presented to the faculty mentor for approval.

During the semester that the student teaches, periodic meetings will be scheduled to discuss the progress of the class and any problems encountered by the student. At least once during the first semester the student teaches, the faculty mentor will sit in on a class and then meet with the student to provide feedback. If the student is teaching an online course, the mentor will be added to the Blackboard shell as an instructor to enable periodic review of course activity.