

Greensboro College MA in Religion, Theology, and Culture Capstone Project Guidelines

General:

- Students must complete a capstone project—either a thesis or comprehensive exam—during their final semester of graduate study.
- The MA thesis or exam must be done while the students are enrolled in the Capstone courses.
- The Capstone courses must be taken in a row in the final semester of graduate study.
- The supervisor of the Capstone courses will ordinarily serve as exam or thesis supervisor and will grade the project.

Registration and Timeline:

1. Students must contact their desired faculty Capstone supervisor at least **6 weeks before the last registration period**.
2. During the final registration period, students should enroll in:
 - a. REP 6900: Bibliographical Research for Capstone (2 credit hours)
 - b. REP 6910: Capstone: Thesis or Exam (2 credit hours)
3. Enrollment in these courses requires the Capstone supervisor's approval.
4. Students must inform their capstone supervisor of their choice between the comprehensive exam or thesis **before beginning the capstone courses**.

Comprehensive Exam Option

During the first Capstone Course (REP 6900), students will:

1. Work closely with their Capstone supervisor to develop a list of exam content and resources.
2. Include at least 4 primary resources for their exam (recommended: 6-15 resources total).
3. Try to include a balance of primary and secondary resources, with recommendations to include:
 - a. At least two classical/traditional resources (before 1950)
 - b. At least two contemporary resources (after 1950)

Examples:

- For an exam on the Gospel of Luke, students will want to include 2 classical interpretations such as Augustine, Martin Luther, or Hans Conzelmann, while also including 2 recent articles from materialistic, racial, or feminist perspectives.
- For an exam on continental philosophy of religion, students will want to include 6 primary readings from 2 thinkers in each different era, such as:
 - Modern thought (Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant)

- 19th Century thought (Hegel, Schleiermacher, Schelling, Kierkegaard, Feuerbach, Newman, Nietzsche, James)
- 20th Century thought (Whitehead, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, Tillich, Rahner)

During the second Capstone course (REP 6910), students will:

1. Take the exam designed by their Capstone supervisor, which will consist of three to seven questions requiring students to synthesize issues from the list of the exam.
2. Complete the exam either in an in-class setting or as a take-home exam, as determined by the supervisor. Students may take an oral exam with the permission of their supervisor.
3. Submit an exam response with a minimum length of 4,000 words (approximately 15 pages), with a recommended length of 20-50 pages.

Thesis Option

During the first Capstone Course (REP 6900), students will:

1. Prepare and submit a thesis proposal (5-15 pages), presenting a concise form of the topic, rationale, main issues, sources, and methodology along with an outline of its projected chapters.
2. Submit the proposal to the Capstone supervisor **one week before** the oral examination.
3. Pass an oral examination on the thesis proposal.

During the second Capstone course (REP 6910), students will:

1. Secure a **second reader before the beginning** of this course (typically another full-time faculty member in the religion department).
2. Write and complete a thesis with the following requirements: The thesis should be submitted in a Microsoft Word format. The thesis should use Times New Roman font, size 12, double-spaced. The thesis should have one-inch margins and no extra space between paragraphs. The thesis should use footnote citations in the Chicago Manual Style. The thesis should have page numbers at the bottom. The required minimum length of the thesis is 4,000 words (approximately 15 pages), while the recommended length is 25-70 pages.
3. Include a **cover page** (can be found below) and **bibliography** in their thesis.
4. Submit the completed thesis to the Capstone supervisor and second reader at least **one week before** the last day of the course.
5. Receive written feedback from both the Capstone supervisor and second reader prior to the defense.
6. Defend the thesis before the end of the course. During the defense, students will have an opportunity to respond to written feedback they have received regarding the thesis. Faculty may pose further critical questions regarding the thesis. In addition, faculty and students should discuss the implications of the thesis for the wider field of study and for

the student's vocation. For example, if a student plans to pursue doctoral work, what are further, related questions the students might explore? How might they build on this research in further research? If a student is entering or returning to the practice of ministry, how will the work they have done in the thesis shape that ministry? How might they translate this research for a lay audience or an educational setting? The tone of the defense should be constructive and not harrowing. Finally, the defense should be an occasion to acknowledge the student's accomplishment.

7. **Publish** the defended thesis on the ProQuest ETD with the help of the supervisor before the day of commencement.

THESIS TITLE:

THESIS SUBTITLE (if presented)

STUDENT'S NAME

GREENSBORO COLLEGE

DEFENCE DATE

A thesis submitted to the

Department of Religion, Ethics, and Philosophy

In partial fulfillment of requirements

For the degree of Master of Arts in Religion, Theology, and Culture

Thesis Advisor: _____

Second Reader: _____