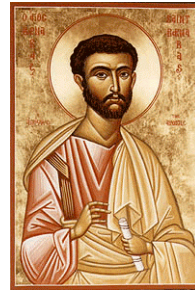


SASKATOON THEOLOGICAL UNION

GRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM

Handbook on Policies and Procedures



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1. PURPOSE

The Graduate Studies Program, leading to the Master of Sacred Theology (STM) degree, has been established to provide advanced theological courses of study

- both for those who desire in depth theological study and/or to prepare for further study at the doctoral level (*Track 1*)
- and for those who are interested primarily in continuing education (*Track 2*).

The program has been designed to appeal particularly to those who desire to combine their study with ongoing pastoral ministry or who otherwise prefer to work towards the degree on a part-time basis, and to those who desire to complete a graduate degree without having to relocate.

2. ORGANIZATION

2.1 **General Description**

The Graduate Studies Program is a creation of the three member schools of the Saskatoon Theological Union (STU). While the program is jointly administered, students enrol in the school of their choice, which also grants the degree.

General oversight of the program is vested in the Graduate Studies Council, which consists of all faculty members in the Saskatoon Theological Union.

The activities of the Graduate Studies Program are supervised by the Director, with the assistance of the Executive Committee. The Director and the members of the Executive Committee are appointed by the Graduate Studies Council.

Academic aspects of the program are shaped and supervised by several Sectional Committees, organized according to the various disciplines of the theological curriculum. Each Sectional Committee is composed of all faculty members teaching in a specified discipline (or disciplines), and is chaired by one of its members (Chairperson).

The supervision of individual students is carried out by the appropriate Sectional Committee, working in conjunction with an appointed Program Adviser.

2.2 **Graduate Studies Council**

The Graduate Studies Council has responsibility for general oversight of all aspects of the Graduate Studies Program.

The Council consists of all full time faculty members in the Saskatoon Theological Union.

The Council meets three times annually, normally in October, January and April.

Meetings of the Council are chaired by the Director.

2.3 Director

2.31 The Director is the chief administrative officer of the Graduate Studies Program and is responsible to the Graduate Studies Council as a whole for the administration and integrity of the program.

2.32 The office of Director is filled on a rotating basis by a faculty member from one of the three participating schools, in the following order:

College of Emmanuel and St. Chad,
Lutheran Theological Seminary,
St. Andrew's College.

It is the responsibility of the school upon which the Director's office shall successively devolve to nominate one of its members as Director.

The Director is appointed by the Graduate Studies Council, for a three year term beginning on July 1. (The appointment should be made at the January meeting of the Council, so that the name can appear in the calendar for the following year.) In the event of a vacancy in the Director's office due to death, retirement, resignation, or sabbatical, the responsible school is to appoint a replacement for the remainder of the unexpired term.

2.33 It is the responsibility of the Director:

2.33.1 To receive applications for admission as they are forwarded by the Registrars of the individual schools, and to forward them to the appropriate Sectional Committee for discussion;

2.33.2 To convene and preside over meetings of the Executive Committee and the Graduate Studies Council;

2.33.3 To supervise the maintenance of records on the status and progress of all students enrolled in the program;

2.33.4 To make an annual report at the fall meeting of the Council;

2.33.5 To provide for an orderly flow of information through the structures of the Graduate Studies Program, and between the program and the students registered in it;

2.33.6 To supervise procedures for the demonstration of linguistic competence, working in consultation with the appropriate Sectional Committee to evaluate previous language studies, appoint examiners, and approve alternative competencies;

2.33.7 To receive appeals on questions of grades or other academic issues, and to administer the appeals process in accordance with the guidelines set down by the Graduate Studies Council;

2.33.8 To supervise expenditures for the Graduate Studies Program as directed by the Graduate Studies Council;

2.33.9 To appoint:

- (1) Program and Thesis Advisers, in consultation with the Sectional Committee;
- (2) Thesis Examining Committees;
- (3) other committees as required;

2.33.10 To transmit to the Graduate Studies Council for their recommendation the names of all students certified by their Thesis Examining Committees as having successfully passed their oral examinations, and to transmit to the school of the candidate's registration the names of all students endorsed by the Council as having completed the requirements for the awarding of the degree;

2.33.11 To arrange for an annual series of Graduate Student and Faculty Seminars;

2.33.12 To represent the Graduate Studies Program in appropriate ways as occasions arise (e.g., responding to correspondence, relating to the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Saskatchewan).

2.4 Sectional Committees

2.41 The Sectional Committees consist of all faculty members teaching in a particular area of the theological curriculum. The number of committees and the precise areas covered by each of them can be adjusted from time to time to suit changing circumstances. At present, the Sectional Committees are:

- *Biblical Studies* (Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, New Testament, Biblical languages);
- *Inter-disciplinary Theological Studies* (church history, systematic theology, philosophy of religion, ethics, church and society);
- *Pastoral Studies* (liturgics, homiletics, Christian education, parish ministry, pastoral care and counselling).

2.42 For each Sectional Committee there is a Chairperson, who arranges and chairs the meetings, and represents the Section on the Executive Committee. Chairpersons are selected by the Sectional Committees and appointed by the Graduate Studies Council. The term of office is two years, beginning on July 1. (Appointments should be made at the January meeting of the Council, so that the names can appear in the calendar for the following year.) The term is renewable.

2.43 Sectional Committees normally meet three times annually, prior to the meetings of the Graduate Studies Council. Other meetings may be called by the Chairperson or Director, as required.

2.44 It is the responsibility of the Sectional Committee:

2.44.1 To receive and discuss applications for admission, and to forward them, with recommendation, to the Executive Committee (cc: student's Registrar). In addition to admissibility, the Committee might make recommendation in other areas, such as language requirements, qualifying work, advanced standing, etc.;

2.44.2 To work in consultation with the Director to supervise procedures for the demonstration of linguistic competence (see §2.33.6 above);

- 2.44.3 To guide and supervise all aspects of a student's academic program, working in conjunction with the student's Program Adviser once the Adviser has been appointed;
- 2.44.4 To make recommendation to the Director (cc student's Registrar) concerning the appointment of a student's Program Adviser, taking into account the student's program and acting in consultation with the student.
- 2.44.5 To consider and make decisions about thesis proposals presented for approval;
- 2.44.6 To consider and make recommendations concerning such curricular and program matters as are forwarded to the Sectional Committees by the Director or the Graduate Studies Council.

2.5 Sectional Committee Chairpersons

- 2.51** Sectional Committee Chairpersons are selected and appointed according to the terms and procedures outlined in §2.42 above.
- 2.52** It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of a Sectional Committee:
 - 2.45.1 To convene and chair regular and (as required) extraordinary meetings of the Sectional Committee;
 - 2.45.2 To report the results of these meetings to the Graduate Studies Council;
 - 2.45.3 To sit on the Executive Committee;
 - 2.45.4 To communicate to the student concerned (cc student's Registrar) any decisions taken by the Sectional Committee or Graduate Studies Council concerning the student's program (perhaps via the Program or Thesis Adviser, where appropriate).

2.6 Executive Committee

- 2.61** The Executive Committee consists of the Director, the Chairpersons of the Sectional Committees, and, where necessary, one or two other members to ensure that all schools are represented. If such additional members are needed, they are appointed by the Graduate Studies Council at the January meeting for a one year term.
- 2.62** The role of the Executive Committee is to advise the Director, and to function on behalf of the Graduate Studies Council in between meetings.

2.7 Program Adviser

A student's Program Adviser works in conjunction with the Sectional Committee to supervise all aspects of a student's program and to advise the student as he or she moves through the program. The Program Adviser is appointed by the Director on the recommendation of the Sectional Committee, which makes its recommendation after consultation with the student. The appointment does not have to be made at the time of admission, but should be made as soon as an appropriate adviser can be identified. The Program Adviser might be chosen with a view to that person becoming the Thesis Adviser for students in the *Track 1* program, but this is not necessary.

2.8 Thesis Adviser

2.81 The Thesis Adviser is appointed in accordance with the following procedure:

- 2.81.1 Having made some determination of the desired thesis area, the student finds a faculty member prepared to serve as Thesis Adviser. This might be the student's Program Adviser (see §2.7), but not necessarily so.
- 2.81.2 The student requests that this faculty member be appointed, the request being conveyed to the appropriate Sectional Committee (usually by the faculty member in question).
- 2.81.3 After reviewing the student's work to date, and taking the request of the student into account, the Sectional Committee makes a recommendation to the Director concerning the appointment of a Thesis Adviser (together with any other recommendations concerning the student's program it deems appropriate).
- 2.81.4 Acting on the recommendation of the Sectional Committee, the Director appoints the Thesis Adviser.

2.82 It is the responsibility of the Thesis Adviser:

- 2.82.1 To advise and supervise the student during the remainder of his or her program;
- 2.82.2 To assist the student in formulating a thesis proposal for submission to the Sectional Committee;
- 2.82.3 To supervise the student in the research for and the writing of the thesis, ensuring that the thesis conforms to the requirements of the program;
- 2.82.4 To inform the Director when the student is prepared for the oral thesis defence;
- 2.82.5 To ensure that any emendations required by the examiners are made in the thesis prior to its deposit in the library.

3. PROGRAM

3.1 Prerequisites

3.11 Admission Requirements

- 3.11.1 Students must possess a Bachelor's degree from a recognized university or college and an M.Div. degree, or their equivalents.
- 3.11.2 A minimum GPA of 75 per cent (or its equivalent) in the M.Div. is normally required.

- 3.11.3 Individuals with a Master of Theological Studies (a two year lay degree) may be admitted:
- with a major in the *Biblical* Section normally, if they have a major in Biblical studies (8 semester courses) and meet the language prerequisites;
 - with a major in the *Theology, Ethics, and History of Christianity* Section if they have an M.T.S. (Honors) or an M.T.S. with a minimum GPA of 75 per cent and meet the language prerequisites;
 - with a major in the *Pastoral Theology* Section if all other requirements are met (when this major becomes available).

3.12 Sectional Prerequisites

In each case, the specific competencies are to be identified and determined by the respective Sectional Committees.

Competencies may be demonstrated by successful completion of courses, or by special tests arranged by the Director in consultation with the Sectional Committee.

Courses taken to demonstrate a competence may not be credited towards the STM course requirements. It is preferable that students complete all language or methodology prerequisites before entering the program.

This preference notwithstanding, the following requirements apply:

- In the case of *Track 1*, one of the two prerequisites is required for entrance into the program; the other must be completed before the student registers for the fourth course.
- In the case of *Track 2*, the prerequisite must be demonstrated prior to registration for the fifth course.

3.12.1 *Biblical Section* *

Students enrolled in *Track 1* must demonstrate competence in

- (1) a modern language in addition to English, and
- (2) the Biblical language appropriate to their major area of study.

Students enrolled in *Track 2* must demonstrate competence in the Biblical language appropriate to their major area of study. In either case, the Biblical language prerequisite must be met before students register for any courses that count toward the major.

3.12.2 *Theology, History & Ethics Section* *

Students enrolled in *Track 1* must demonstrate competence in

- (1) a modern language in addition to English, and
- (2) an additional language, or other specialized skill, appropriate to the area of research.

Students enrolled in *Track 2* must demonstrate competence in a language in addition to English or some other specialized skill appropriate to the area of study.

3.12.3 *Pastoral Section* *

[Yet to be determined]

- 3.12.4 Competency in a language is understood generally as the ability to read and comprehend a text in that language (a scholarly text in the case of a modern language; a primary text in the case of a biblical language) with the aid of a lexicon and at a modest rate of speed. For the purposes of this program, competency can be defined as the facility demonstrated by the successful completion of a second year course in the language with

a grade of at least 70%. Competencies can be demonstrated by providing evidence of the successful completion within the previous three years of a course where such facility in the language was required (e.g., a second year course in the language, or, in the case of a Biblical language, of an exegesis course requiring substantial work in the primary texts.) Alternatively, competencies can be demonstrated by means of a special test arranged by the Sectional Committee, working in conjunction with the Director.

In any case, it is the responsibility of the respective Sectional Committee to decide on the means by which a competency is to be demonstrated and to determine whether competency requirements have been met. With respect to methodological requirements, the defining and testing of such competencies is to be determined by the respective Section.

Courses taken to demonstrate a competence may not be credited towards the STM course requirements.

3.13 Overseas equivalences

Since methods of recording grades and conferring degrees differ from country to country, overseas students wishing to enter the STM program must write to the Registrar of one of the three schools, submitting details of their academic careers including, wherever possible, transcripts of academic work and copies of any degrees or diplomas held, together with some information about the institutions granting the degrees. For those whose first language is not English, a minimum TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of 550 (paper based) or 213 (computer based) is a prerequisite. Test scores must be forwarded directly to the Registrar of the appropriate college.

3.14 Qualifying work

Candidates may be required to complete qualifying work prior to formal admittance to the program, at the discretion of the appropriate Sectional Committee.

3.2 Application and Admission

3.21 Applications for admission can be made to any of the three schools in the Saskatoon Theological Union. Applications forms may be obtained from any of the Registrars.

3.22 Applications are received by the Registrar and then forwarded to the Director. After reviewing the application, the Director forwards it, with any pertinent comment, to the appropriate Sectional Committee, which then sends it on to the Graduate Studies Council, with recommendation.

The Council rules on the application and communicates its decision to the school of registration, which in turn notifies the applicant and (if the decision is positive) enrolls the applicant in the program.

3.33 Applications may be submitted at any time during the year, and will be considered by the appropriate bodies as soon as possible. To allow sufficient time for the various stages of the process to take place, however, it is necessary that the application be submitted at least six

weeks prior to the meeting of the Graduate Council at which it is to be considered.

3.3 Advanced Standing

3.31 Credit may be allowed for work done in other institutions. A request for such credit should be made at the time of application, and allowance is at the discretion of the Graduate Studies Council. The maximum allowable is one-half of the required course work (i.e., three courses for *Track 1*, and four for *Track 2*). If a student has been away from formal theological studies for a period of more than ten years, credit can be given only in those cases where the student can demonstrate that he or she has maintained currency in the field. Demonstration of currency will be determined by the relevant Sectional Committee, using whatever means is deemed appropriate.

3.32 Students who have not completed the M.Div., but whose remaining M.Div. requirements do not constitute a full semester load, may take classes for possible advanced credit toward the STM degree in the same semester in which they complete the M.Div. requirements, with the proviso that such classes:

- (1) not number more than two;
- (2) are not taken as an overload; and
- (3) are declared as graduate courses at the time of registration.

The crediting of such classes toward a graduate degree remains in all cases subject to the discretion of the Graduate Studies Council.

3.4 Requirements

3.41 Major Area of Study

At the time of application, students shall choose one of the following major areas of study, within one of the three Sections of the program:

Section	Major
Biblical Studies	Hebrew Bible/Old Testament New Testament
Interdisciplinary Theological Studies	Systematic Theology History of Christianity Historical Theology Ethics Church & Society
Pastoral Studies	[Yet to be determined]

The possibility also exists for students to do a cross-Sectional major, i.e., a major drawing on subject matter from two of the Sections.

3.42 Course Work

3.42.1 For *Track 1*, six graduate-level semester courses are required:

Three courses in the major area (at least two at the 400 level, one of which may include a focus on methodologies, if required by the section)

Two courses in a minor area

Critical Thinking Seminar, IU 400 (a required component of this seminar is attending the GSC seminar series, at one of which the student will report on his/her own work)

In addition, students in a *Track 1* program are required to write a Thesis as the final component of their program (see below).

3.42.2 For *Track Two*, eight graduate-level semester courses are required:

Four courses in the major area (at least two at the 400 level, one of which may include a focus on methodologies, if required by the section)

Three courses in other areas (at least one course at the 400 level)

Critical Thinking Seminar, IU 400 (a required component of this seminar is attending the GSC seminar series, at one of which the student will report on his/her own work)

3.42.3 Once the requirements for seminars and 400-level courses have been met, students may obtain credit towards the STM in two additional ways:

- (1) By taking M.Div. courses (at the 200- or 300-level) with supplemental work arranged with the instructor. Such courses will be identified as graduate courses (e.g., on transcripts) by the suffix G added to the course number. It is the responsibility of the student to indicate at the beginning of such a course that it is being taken for graduate credit. Courses at the 100-level are excluded from the STM program with the exception that students majoring in biblical studies may study a second biblical language as an elective in their degree program.
- (2) By arranging for Reading and Research courses with an appropriate faculty member. Such courses require the consent of the student's Program Adviser.

3.42.4 The minimum passing grade for a course is 70 per cent.

Classes for which a student has been assigned a grade lower than 70 per cent must be repeated or the student must offer a substitute.

3.43 Thesis

The final requirement for the *Track 1* program is the successful completion of a thesis.

3.43.1 The supervision of the thesis is the responsibility of the student's Thesis Adviser (§2.81), working in conjunction with the respective Sectional Committee.

3.43.2 The student shall choose the subject of the thesis in consultation with the Thesis Adviser. Before being allowed to proceed with the thesis project, the student is required to present a thesis proposal for approval, first by the Thesis Adviser and then by the Sectional Committee.

The thesis proposal should contain the following elements:

- working title;
- brief statement of purpose;
- longer introduction to the project, commenting on such things as
 - the reason why the project is interesting or important,
 - the scope of the material to be covered,
 - the methodology to be used,
 - possible results, etc.;
- tentative outline;
- core bibliography.

3.43.3 The thesis must be typewritten or computer-printed in a letter-quality style.

While there are no rigid length limitations, theses should normally be in the range of 20,000 to 35,000 words.

The title page should conform to the normal STM format, and should be followed by an abstract (200 words).

The thesis itself should conform to one of the standard style guides in its most recent edition; e.g., K. L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*; W. G. Campbell and S. V. Ballou, *Form and Style*; *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Whichever of these authorities is chosen, the student shall ensure that the rules are applied consistently throughout the thesis.

3.43.4 When the Thesis Adviser has determined that the thesis is ready for defence, he or she will inform the Director, who will arrange for an oral examination of the thesis after first determining that all other requirements have been met.

The examination committee shall consist of the Thesis Adviser and at least two other faculty members. The members of the committee will be appointed by the Director, who will ensure (wherever possible) that each of the three schools is represented. The Director shall normally preside at the oral examination.

At the end of the oral examination the committee shall make a decision concerning the acceptability of the thesis and assign one of the following:

- Acceptable
- Acceptable with Minor Revisions
- Not Acceptable without Major Revisions and a subsequent Defence
- Not Acceptable.

3.43.5 If the Examining committee assigns a passing grade to the thesis, it shall be the responsibility of the Director to present the recommendation of the examination committee for ratification by the Graduate Studies Council, and to inform the Registrar of the school in which the student is enrolled that all requirements have been met. If the committee stipulates any corrections or alterations of the thesis, it shall be the responsibility of the Thesis Adviser to certify to the Director, before the recommendation goes forward to the Graduate Studies Council, that such corrections or alterations have been made.

3.43.6 If the examining committee decides that the thesis is not acceptable, the candidate may request the Graduate Studies Council to approve a second defence. In considering such a request, the Council shall take into account the reasons for the candidate's failure in the initial defence, any remedial work undertaken by the candidate, and the opinion of the

Thesis Adviser. A second defence may not take place sooner than four months and later than twelve months after the first defence. In case of conflict with the absolute time limits for the completion of the program, the limits can be extended to accommodate a second defence. A candidate who is unsuccessful in a second defence shall be judged to have failed the program.

- 3.43.7 Two copies of the thesis in its approved form, including the abstract and bearing the signatures of the Thesis Adviser and the other examiners, are to be submitted to the school granting the degree.

3.5 Time Considerations and Deadlines

- 3.51** The required seminars will normally be offered in concentrated two-week blocks in the spring or summer. This will make it possible for persons to complete the program without having to relocate to Saskatoon for a period of time. Every attempt should be made to offer the required seminars with sufficient regularity that a student will be able to complete them all within a three-year time frame. (Note that this might require doing two seminars in one of the three years.)
- 3.52** All requirements of the program must normally be completed
- within five years of the commencement of the fourth semester course (*Track 1*)
 - or the fifth semester course (*Track 2*).
- 3.53** Upon written request a twelve month extension may be granted by the Graduate Studies Council. There is no possibility of further extensions (except for the circumstances described in §3.33.6) or re-admission.
- 3.54** The responsibility for identifying all requirements and for meeting them within the appointed time-frame rests with the student.

3.6 Appeals

A student who is not satisfied with a grade assigned in a course should speak with the professor and seek to find a satisfactory solution. If such a solution is not found, the student may submit a written statement of the grounds of the appeal, together with the relevant papers, to the Director of Graduate Studies. The Director shall appoint a committee, in consultation with the faculty of the school in which the student is registered, to review the matter. The decision of the committee shall be final.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

4.1 Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant shall assist the Director in the administration of the program. The duties of the Administrative Assistant shall include:

- distributing notices of meeting of the Graduate Studies Council;
- working with the Director to prepare the agendas for such meetings;
- preparing and distributing minutes for meetings of the Graduate Studies Council and of the Executive Committee (where necessary);
- maintaining student records;
- maintaining financial records for the program;
- performing such additional duties as the Director shall request.

4.2 Record Keeping

4.21 Records concerning a student's status and progress in the program shall be kept both by the Administrative Assistant and by the Registrar in the school of registration. The primary instrument for record keeping is a Candidate Record Form.

4.22 When the Director first receives an application (forwarded by the Registrar, who keeps a copy), he or she should begin a Candidate Record Form.

In addition to personal information, several items of information should be available from the application form and supporting material:

- qualifying degree;
- school of registration;
- major;
- advanced standing;
- one competency.

Some of this information might have to be confirmed by the Sectional Committee, but in any case as soon as the candidate has been formally admitted into the program, the Director should ensure that all this information is entered onto the Candidate Record Form. At this point the form is added to the candidate's file and forwarded to the Administrative Assistant.

4.23 When students have completed courses for graduate credit, this information should be routinely forwarded to the Administrative Assistant by the Registrars.

In addition, once a year the Administrative Assistant should send a copy of each student's Candidate Record Form to the respective Registrar and Program Adviser, asking if there is any information to be added.

4.3 Fees

4.31 All fees are payable to the school in which the student is registered.

4.32 Tuition fees are set by the Graduate Studies Council in consultation with the member schools.

4.33 Tuition for thesis preparation and supervision is equivalent to two credit courses and is normally payable when the thesis proposal has been approved.

4.34 There is a continuation fee (currently \$50), payable to the school of registration for any semester in which the student is not registered for a class, including any semester beyond two spent on thesis writing.

- 4.35** Two bound copies of the thesis are to be provided to the school of registration at the student's expense.
- 4.36** There may be a graduation fee, as set by the individual schools.
- 4.37** The degree will be awarded only after the Registrar has ascertained that all fees have been paid.

4.4 Finances

- 4.41** The expenses of administering the Graduate Studies Program shall be borne by the Saskatoon Theological Union and its member schools. These expenses include but are not necessarily limited to:
- wages paid to the Administrative Assistant;
 - stationary, photocopying and office supplies;
 - appropriate honoraria (thesis examiners external to the STU; visiting lecturers; etc.).
- 4.42** Each year at the spring meeting of the Graduate Studies Council, the Director shall present a budget for the following year (prepared in consultation with the Administrative Assistant). The budget should include an amount to be requested from the Saskatoon Theological Union.