



# Master of Theological Studies PROGRAM HANDBOOK 2024-2025



Welcome to the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University!

Located in Berkeley, California, JST-SCU is an international center for the study of theology and ministerial formation. We are a graduate school of Santa Clara University. Students join us from across the nation and around the world to prepare for a broad range of ministries and service to the Church and the world. Our students represent a wide age range of lay women and men, Jesuits in formation, clergy, and members of various religious orders.

At JST-SCU, we believe with Pope Francis, that “Teaching and studying theology means living on a frontier, one in which the Gospel meets the needs of the people to whom it should be proclaimed in an understandable and meaningful way. We must guard against a theology that is exhausted in academic dispute or one that looks at humanity from a glass castle.” We strive to engage in a theological enterprise that shapes the Church and society with the values of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In other words, theology as “an expression of a Church which is a ‘field hospital’, which lives her mission of salvation and healing in the world” (Pope Francis, “Letter to the Catholic University of Argentina,” 2015).



As a Jesuit theology center, we take to heart the call of the Society of Jesus to labor for justice as an extension of God’s mercy. As the Jesuits’ 36<sup>th</sup> General Congregation put it, “reconciliation is always a work of justice, a justice discerned and enacted in local communities and contexts” (Decree 1, n. 31). Our watchwords – “living theology, transforming our world” – express our commitment to a shared future where the good news of the Gospel lives in the communities we serve.

Our school is blessed with a variety of unique gifts and strengths – *intellectual* strength, JST-SCU is a constellation and concentration of expertise, competence, and creativity; *spiritual* strength, because we programmatically integrate theology and Ignatian spirituality, liturgical and community life into our core character and offerings; and *institutional* strength, because from its founding in 1934 to its relocation to Berkeley in 1969, JST-SCU has developed renown and pedigree within the lively interreligious, ecumenical, and intercultural contexts of the Graduate Theological Union, and forged strategic integration with Santa Clara University in line with the university’s pursuit of “high-tech innovation rooted in personal, humanistic formation, and social consciousness.”

The distinguished faculty members of JST-SCU are committed to achieving academic excellence, exploring the riches of the Catholic theological tradition, and helping our students appreciate the complex and fascinating ways in which faith finds a home in the many cultures around the globe. As a Jesuit school, we emphasize the social justice dimension of our faith and the Jesuit tradition of holistic education that engages all facets of the lives of our students as well as those we serve. Our students graduate prepared for leadership in the Church and society through the intellectual, spiritual, and pastoral formation they acquire here.

JST-SCU is a member of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU), a vibrant consortium encompassing eight graduate schools of theology in the Bay Area, most of them within a few minutes’ walk of our own campus in Berkeley. In addition, our education is enhanced by the GTU shared doctoral research library, our close relationship with the nearby University of California, and our proximity to the artistic and cultural diversity of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Our school has received the Vatican’s approval to grant licentiate and doctoral degrees that bring with them the Holy See’s recognition wherever our graduates of these two programs minister throughout the world. In this context, theological education and ministerial formation represent “a sort of providential cultural laboratory in which the Church carries out the performative interpretation of the reality brought about by the Christ event and nourished by the gifts of wisdom and knowledge by which the Holy Spirit enriches the People of God in manifold ways....” (*Veritatis Gaudium* “Apostolic Constitution On Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties.”). As a “providential cultural laboratory,” JST-SCU offers a space for experimentation and innovation, creativity and audacity, and collaboration and partnership.

We invite you to make your distinctive contribution to our academic and faith community, as together we enliven faith, promote reconciliation, labor for justice, and participate in God’s mercy.

Welcome to JST-SCU!

Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, S.J.  
Dean, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University

# Table of Contents

<b>Program Guidelines</b>	<b>4</b>
Overview	
Goals/Objectives	
Advanced Standing & Courses Taken Outside of the GTU during the Degree	
Degree Requirements	
Continuing Registration	
Credit Distribution for Coursework – On Campus and Online Tracks	
<b>MTS Synthesis Paper and Project Guidelines</b>	<b>7</b>
Synthesis Paper Style Guidelines	
Project Guidelines	
Filing Deadlines, Registration and Graduation	
<b>Technology Requirements for Online Coursework</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Additional Forms</b>	



# Program Guidelines

## Overview

The Master of Theological Studies is an academic degree program that offers students a broad understanding of the Catholic theological vision through foundational courses in four core areas of study: Biblical Studies; Historical & Systematic Theology; Theological Ethics; and Religion & Culture. The degree culminates with a synthesis project or paper in the student's selected concentration. The degree prepares graduates to be teachers and/or administrators in primary and secondary schools, directors of religious education or of faith formation programs, parish-based leaders, or administrators of various nonprofit organizations and voluntary service programs. Students also learn a theology of ministry for service in a changing Church and world. The MTS is an ideal program for persons engaged in ministry or seeking theological enrichment and a rewarding exploration of their faith. It is "hyflex," meaning that students may choose to combine on-campus and online courses in any combination that works for them.

## Goals and Objectives

### Institutional Learning Goals

1. Students will gain a broad foundation in Christian theology, with a focus on the Roman Catholic tradition.
2. Students will demonstrate a critically-informed approach to faith that promotes social justice for the common good, especially for the benefit of those in greatest need.
3. Students will recognize the interplay between faith and culture in addressing issues that emerge in diverse cultural contexts.

### MTS Student Learning Outcomes

The MTS degree offers students a broad understanding of the Catholic theological tradition and specialized knowledge in a chosen concentration.

MTS Graduates will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge in Biblical Studies; Historical & Systematic Theology; Theological Ethics; and Religion & Culture.
2. Integrate and apply their knowledge of the above areas within a chosen concentration.
3. Demonstrate a critical understanding of social, cultural, and global contexts and their significance to theology.
4. Apply informed knowledge of the Catholic tradition in the assessment of theological questions or pastoral issues.
5. Articulate the connections among their course work, their individual formation as shaped by their own practices, and their interactions with peers or professional colleagues.

## **Advanced Standing & Courses Taken Outside of the GTU During the Degree**

A student who has taken graduate courses in theology not longer than six years prior to registration may petition for advanced placement in the Master of Theological Studies program. This petition may be included with the Application for Admission or it may be submitted during the first semester of study at JST. No more than 12 semester units of advanced standing can be applied to the JST Master of Theological Studies program. Petition forms are available from the Registrar, the Office of Admissions or online on the Registrar's page: <https://www.scu.edu/jst/academics/office-of-the-registrar/>

No units will be transferred which have already been counted toward another degree. No units will be considered for transfer that are not from regionally accredited institutions of higher learning or were not attained at a graduate level.

Students in the MTS program may elect to take courses as Pass/No Pass for no more than 15 credits while in residence at JST, not counting the credits from the MTS 3000 and 3002 seminars.

A student who enrolls in graduate courses in theology at an institution outside of the GTU during their course of study may petition the Associate Dean for transfer credit in the MTS degree program. Petition forms are available online at <https://www.scu.edu/jst/academics/office-of-the-registrar/>.

## **Degree Requirements**

The Master of Theological Studies degree requires the completion of 48 semester hours (16 three-unit courses). A full-time student may expect to complete the Master of Theological Studies degree in two academic years, but must complete the program within five calendar years from the date of first registration in the program. Twelve semester units is the normal full-time course load. The degree program also requires students to submit a paper (roughly 40 pages) or equivalent project synthesizing the theological concentration and the general theological components of the program.

Students in all degree programs must maintain a 3.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) to graduate. A grade of B- or better is necessary in all courses used to satisfy a requirement for all Jesuit School of Theology degree programs.

Students are required to take a course that teaches them the following four religion and culture competencies: conceptual, analytical, theological and pastoral. To fulfill this requirement, students must take RS 2092 Culture, Context and Lived Religion or some other course that teaches the same content, as approved by the Associate Dean.

## **Continuing Registration**

MTS students who have completed coursework and are working on final projects must sign up for a one-credit course continuing registration (MTS 3001) each semester to maintain their student status until their submitted project is approved and they are graduated.

## **Credit Distribution for MTS HyFlex Coursework**

MTS students may come to Berkeley as full-time residential students and take all of their classes in person. However, with our new hyflex format, students now have the option of participating in an on-campus fall orientation and on-campus summer and intersession courses, while taking online, hybrid, and remote classes that are offered year round. Students may also choose to come to Berkeley for one or more regular semesters while completing the rest of their studies online.

Forty-eight semester hours of credit must be completed. Students are strongly encouraged to do at least half of their degree program at the Jesuit School of Theology.

### ***I. Foundations (24 credits)***

- Biblical Studies (6 credits)
  - Historical & Systematic Theology (6 credits)
  - Theological Ethics (6 credits)
  - Religion & Culture (6 credits). RS 2092 Culture, Context and Lived Religion, or an approved equivalent, is required as three of these six units.
- 3 credits for the MTS Proseminars I and II (MTS 3000 and 3002, 1.5 credits each) to be taken in the last two consecutive semesters of the student's program. The Proseminar includes a synthesis paper or project in the area of the student's specialization. This is further explained below.

### ***II. Concentrations (12 credits)***

- Biblical Studies
- Historical & Systematic Theology
- Theological Ethics
- Religion & Culture
- Christian Spirituality

### ***III. Electives (9 credits)***

Students may take 9 credits of electives at JST, around the GTU, or at UC Berkeley.

### ***IV. Synthesis Paper or Project***

MTS students are to write a paper (roughly 40 pages) or complete an equivalent project synthesizing the theological concentration and the general theological components of the program. This paper or project is to be done under the direction of a full-time JST faculty member and with a second reader, both approved by the Associate Dean. The student must submit a proposal for the paper or project, including the names of the director and reader, to the Associate Dean for approval.

# MTS Synthesis Paper/Project Guidelines

MTS students must write a paper (roughly 40 pages) or present an equivalent project synthesizing the theological concentration and the general theological components of the program. This paper/project is to be done under the direction of a full-time JST faculty member and with a second reader, both approved by the Associate Dean.

**Proposal:** A proposal for the project or paper is subject to the approval of the Associate Dean, who will also approve the principal advisor and a second reader. A form for this proposal is included in this handbook.

**Grade for Synthesis Paper:** A sample grade report form is included in this handbook. A copy of the grade sheet should be given to each reader along with the final version of the synthesis paper or project.

**Preparing and Filing of Synthesis Paper:** The MTS synthesis paper should be formatted in accordance with Library specifications, using the most recent edition of *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, by Kate Turabian.

One PDF copy of the final, corrected and signed version of the synthesis paper or project should be digitally filed with the JST Registrar's Office. The MTS synthesis paper will be kept on file at JST.

**Synthesis Paper Deadline:** The MTS synthesis paper must be graded, corrected, signed and submitted to the JST Registrar by the **first Monday in May** for May graduation.

All forms mentioned above can be found in the back of this handbook, and are also available online at <https://www.scu.edu/jst/academics/office-of-the-registrar/>



## Style Guidelines for Paper

Turabian is the writing style for Graduate Theological Union theses and dissertations (i.e., the most recent edition of *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, by Kate Turabian). Approval of style is the responsibility of the candidate's committee.

### SPACING

Double spacing is required for the main body of the work except in those places where conventional usage calls for single spacing, e.g., footnotes, indented quotations, tables, etc.

### FONT

The type size should be 12 point. Type used for charts, drawings, graphs, tables, footnotes, etc., may differ according to format and space requirements, but should be at least 10 point.

### MARGINS

Margin requirements apply to all pages, whether text, illustration, charts, graphs, or other content. Be sure to check the margins not only on pages with text, but also pages with charts, graphs, or images.

Left: 1 1/2 inches (In the event a hard copy of the paper is bound, the left-hand margin will fall into a gutter; for this reason the left margin is larger than the others.)

Top, right, and bottom: 1 inch

Page numbers may be no closer than 1/2 inch from edge.

### TITLE PAGE:

A sample of the required title page can be found at the back of this handbook.





## Guidelines for the MTS Synthesis Project

An MTS project differs from an MTS synthesis paper in that it is immediately ready for pastoral, educational, counseling, or other practical situations. It is an application of theological expertise to a particular need or for a particular group.

Examples of MTS projects include syllabi for courses, materials for retreats, educational films, blogs, etc. Criteria for grading M.T.S. projects include:

1. Does the project seem to be informed by good theological understanding in the student's area of concentration, including appropriate bibliographical material?
2. Does the project reflect good general theological knowledge, including relevant bibliographical material?
3. Is the material presented appropriate in topics, language and level of difficulty for its intended audience?
4. Does the Analytical Introduction (see below) clearly state the purpose, methodology and goals of the project?
5. Does the project seem likely to achieve the goals stated, assuming appropriate audience and presentation?

MTS projects should be prefaced by an Analytical Introduction of about 5-8 typed, double-spaced pages explaining the project. Material to be covered in the Analytical Introduction includes:

1. **Title**
2. **Rationale and purpose** Briefly state why you are doing this project. (E.g., -While teaching 10<sup>th</sup> grade, I came to realize that my students had little or no knowledge of the gospel of John. At the same time, our school has a strong institutional commitment to social justice. In this project, I seek to bring those two dynamics into dialogue.)) Next, describe the purpose of the project and its intended audience (e.g., -This class is intended to provide High School students with a solid introduction to the gospel of John, especially as that text speaks to questions of social justice.))
3. **Goals** (e.g. -Retreatants will be introduced to *Lectio divina* as a prayer practice.)) What, specifically, will the recipients of your work gain from it? Most projects will have 3-4 distinct goals.
4. **Structure and Methodology:** How is the project organized, and why in this way? How will your project meet its goals? What scholarly resources and concepts are you drawing on, and why? Make sure to connect the aspects of your project clearly to your bibliography. (NOT: -I am using historical-critical methodology to read the text. RATHER: -The historical-critical scholarship of\_\_ shapes this project. As\_\_ states, \_Scripture without a sense of historical context is deracinated.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I will )) This should be the main part of your paper.
5. **Materials**—A schedule, budget, advertising flier, or other appropriate materials may be included here.

## 6. Conclusion

NOTE: In general, remember that the MTS project is to be equivalent to a 40 page paper. Therefore, if your project includes a structural task (like designing a parish education program or a semester-long course), while you need not provide all the specific texts you will need to create, you should include enough specific materials for your graders to have a sense that you are integrating your theological knowledge well in the project. For a project that is a school class, this would mean including some lectures in full text (i.e., if speaking from an outline, include the outline), while the syllabus will also be significant in evaluating the project overall. For a guidebook for hospital chaplains, this would mean including all or most of the final text, but some chapters may be left in outline form. For a blog, submit the website address, but in your introduction highlight several entries, perhaps with feedback from or interaction with readers. If the project involves research with people, SCU protocols on human subjects must be observed.

### **Filing deadlines, registration and graduation for MTS Students:**

#### **Filing Deadlines for Graduation:**

- Spring graduates: The filing deadline is the first Monday in May.
- September/October graduates: The filing deadline is the date of the late registration deadline for Fall Semester registration.
- Fall registrants completing before the spring semester: The filing deadline is the date of the late registration deadline for Spring Semester registration. These students will receive their degree in May.

#### **Registration Requirements:**

Students must file their synthesis papers by the late registration deadline for the upcoming semester in order to avoid having to pay tuition for an additional semester.

**Graduations:** JST has two graduation dates each academic year:

- May (for students who finish during the fall semester or by the spring May deadline)
- September/October (for students who finish in late May through the summer)
- NOTE regarding Commencement Ceremony: The only students permitted to ‘walk’ in the commencement ceremony in May are those who have finished or will finish all requirements for their degree before or during the spring term.

# Technology Requirements for Online Coursework

## Technical Requirements

The JST uses Moodle for our online classes. Moodle is a web-based learning management tool that allows professors to post readings, assignments, videos, and engage the class in dialogue. In order to use Moodle, you will need a login (provided by the school upon registration) and the following tools to ensure your success:

1. A working email address that you monitor frequently. We recommend that you use your student email address ([\\_\\_\\_\\_@scu.edu](mailto:____@scu.edu)) for this purpose.
2. A working, reliable internet connection and a reliable electric power supply.
3. A computer, laptop, or tablet with an updated operating system (Windows, Mac, Linux) and an updated internet browser (Chrome, Firefox).
4. A webcam.
5. A microphone.

## Recommended Browsers

[Google Chrome](#) and [Mozilla Firefox](#) are recommended for use with Moodle with a computer. Safari is not recommended. On smartphones and tablets, use a web browser to access Moodle (do not use the Moodle app).

## Recommended Settings

- Make sure that the browser is set to accept cookies (from both 1st party and 3rd party).
- Javascript must be enabled.

## Recommended Software

The latest versions of these Adobe products are required for most classes:

[Adobe Reader](#)

[Adobe Flash Player](#)

The latest versions of these other media players are also suggested:

[Windows Media Player](#) (for PC's)

[Apple QuickTime](#) (for Macs)



This worksheet is intended to assist you in determining your progress in the M.T.S. program.

Student's Name:  Date:

**M.T.S. Hyflex**

<b>Foundations (24 units)</b>	
<b>Biblical Studies (BS, OT, NT)</b> 1. 2.	<b>Historical &amp; Systematic Theology (HS, ST, LS, SP, PT)</b> 1. 2.
<b>Theological Ethics (CE)</b> 1. 2.	<b>Religion &amp; Culture (RS, HR, RA)</b> 1. RS 2092: Culture, Context & Lived Religion or equivalent 2.

<b>A. Concentration (12 units)</b>	<b>Electives (9 units)</b>
1. 2. 3. 4.	1. 2. 3.

<b>M.T.S. Proseminar 1 (1.5 units)</b>	<b>M.T.S. Proseminar 2 (1.5 units)</b>
--	--



Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Paper/Project:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Area of Concentration: \_\_\_\_\_

**READERS' SIGNATURES:**

Director/Academic Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

1. **Scope & Nature** (½ page): Briefly describe the scope and nature of your paper or project. Within what social, historical, and/or cultural context is your work situated? Who or what are the subject(s) of your study?
2. **Research Question**
3. **Thesis Statement**
4. **Structure and Methodology** (1-2 pages): How is the project organized and why? How will your project meet its goals? What scholarly resources and concepts are you drawing from, and why? Methodology should comprise a large portion of your paper.
5. **Significance** (1 paragraph): Briefly state why you are doing this project and why it is important to your intended audience. What *specifically* will the recipients of your work gain from it?
6. **Short Bibliography** (1 page)

Approval of JST Associate Dean \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBMIT THIS COMPLETED FORM TO THE ACADEMIC OFFICE.**

A copy will be returned to you.



GRADE REPORT FORM

Master of Theological Studies

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions to the Student:

- 1. Fill in your name and thesis title.
2. Give one copy to each thesis reader or project committee member including the director.

Title of Thesis/Extended Research Paper/Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions to Director and Readers:

- 1. Please check one of the following grade options.
2. Return the signed form to the JST Registrar, 1735 Le Roy, Berkeley, 94709.

- \_\_\_ Pass with No Revisions
\_\_\_ Pass with Minor Revisions
\_\_\_ Returned for Major Revisions\*
\_\_\_ Does Not Pass

Faculty Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\*If the reader feels major revisions are necessary, s/he should contact the student and thesis director, and retain this grade sheet until satisfied that the thesis requires only minor revisions.

Comments (if any): PLEASE INDICATE IF THESE ARE CONFIDENTIAL TO THE ASSOCIATE DEAN. [Use the reverse side of this page or separate sheet if necessary.]

**FORM FOR TITLE PAGE OF SYNTHESIS PAPER**

.....(Title in CAPS).....

-----

A Synthesis Paper by

.....(Your Name).....

presented to

The Faculty of the

Jesuit School of Theology

of Santa Clara University

in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Theological Studies

Berkeley, California

---(month & year of filing)---

Committee Signatures

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type first and last name below line), Director      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type first and last name below line), Reader      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
*IF THERE IS A THIRD READER* (Type first and last name below line), Reader      Date