

Integrative

PAPER GUIDELINES

At the culmination of biblical and theological study in the MAR program, you will be required to integrate your theological training with your vocational field/ministry. This integration is to be expressed in the form of a major paper or project submitted during your final semester. Although the paper or project should be completed as you near the conclusion of your studies, it is important to begin planning for it soon after you enter the program.

It is anticipated that a student will spend a minimum of 195 hours on this summative project, consistent with the normal minimum requirements for five hours of academic credit. However, it is not unusual for better papers to involve significantly more time.

Procedure

1. Topic Approval. You should initiate the topic approval process after you have completed 40 semester hours of credit. The process is initiated by discussing the proposed paper with your academic advisor. Your advisor will be a Resident RTS Faculty member of your choosing that has agreed to work with you. Your advisor may serve as the mentor for the paper or may suggest another exceptionally qualified person with special interest and/or expertise within the general area of research.

After agreeing together on a topic, you should then prepare an overview of your study proposal. This typed proposal should include the following information:

- A cover page with the title of the proposal, your name, your contact information, the name of your advisor, and a space for the advisor's signature.
- A brief biographical sketch indicating your anticipated vocation after graduation.
- A one-page description of your topic.
- An explanation of how this topic will integrate your studies at RTS with your anticipated vocation.
- A projected outline of your paper.
- A preliminary bibliography

This proposal should be submitted to your academic advisor for approval. Your advisor may ask you to make modifications to the proposal before it is approved. When it is approved, your advisor will sign the cover page and keep the proposal on file. You should also keep a copy of

the signed cover page for your records, and submit a copy of the entire proposal to the RTS Atlanta Student Services office.

If you and your advisor agree on another mentor for the project, you then should take the proposal, as approved by your advisor, to the mentor for his or her consideration. In this case, your cover page also should include the name of your mentor and a space for the mentor's signature. (Please bear in mind that the approval and recommendation of a mentor by your advisor in no way obligates someone to accept the role of mentor. You may find it necessary to approach several persons approved by your advisor before identifying someone agreeable to assisting you as your mentor.) Again, your mentor may ask you to make modifications to the proposal before it is approved. At the time that it is approved, your mentor should sign the cover page. Please keep a copy of this page for your records and give another copy to your academic advisor to keep on file.

It should be noted that although the bibliography for this proposal is preliminary, it is not a list that can be generated overnight. On the contrary, this is a preliminary bibliography for your integrative paper. As such, it should integrate a number of topics that you already have researched during the course of your studies. Please keep this in mind as you progress through the MAR program.

2. Registration. Once your topic has been approved, you should register for the Integrative Paper, course number 4ST777. To satisfy the requirements for the Master of Arts in Religion, you must complete five credit hours of study on the Integrative Paper. Although some students complete these five hours in one semester, it is more common for students to work on the paper over the course of a full academic year. In this case, you might want to register for three hours of credit in the fall, and two more hours of credit during the spring semester. You should make this decision in consultation with the registrar. Please note that if you plan to graduate in the spring, the paper must be completely finished and submitted by March 15.

3. Writing the Paper. You should plan to meet regularly with your mentor while researching and completing the requirements of the project or paper. It also will be helpful for you to interact with other persons with expertise in fields of study related to your topic. As much as possible, it is in your best interests to have qualified persons interact with your work as you complete the components. At the same time, you should bear in mind the time required for this work and recognize the kindness and generosity of such assistance.

As you near the conclusion of the project, a draft of the full paper should be provided to your mentor for review. Please allow enough time for the mentor to make recommendations and for you to act on those recommendations before the March 15 deadline. The paper should be typed, double-spaced, and follow the style defined in the most current edition of Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press). In most cases, the paper should be 50-75 pages in length, excluding title page and bibliography. Your mentor should then interact with the overall project and provide you with a list of recommendations for how the paper should be improved.

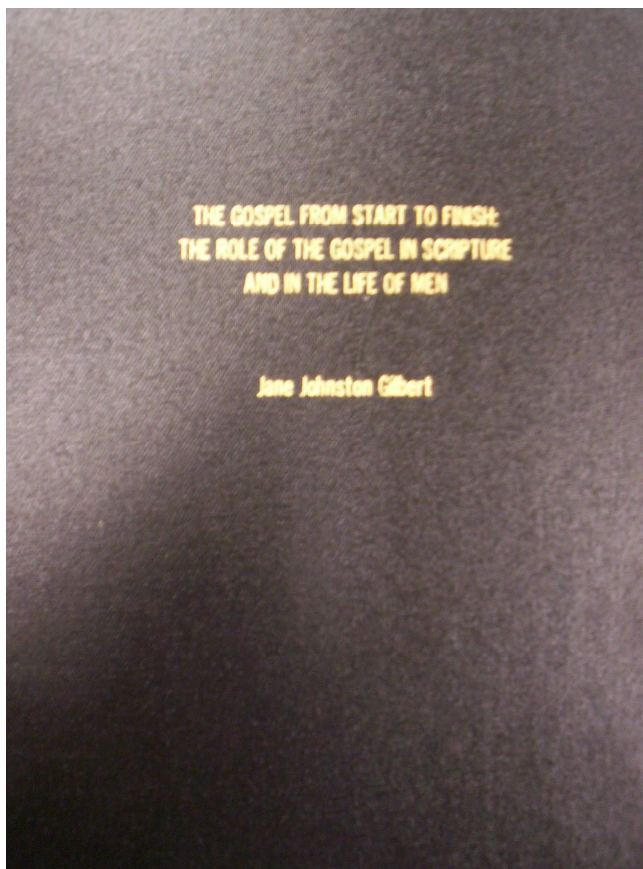
4. Submission of Your Paper or Project. You will prepare an original copy of the paper with title page. If you used a mentor other than your advisor, then this original initially shall be given to the mentor for approval and evaluation as appropriate. The mentor shall forward the paper and a written evaluation to your academic advisor. This final draft, which will be the revision that will be graded, should be received by the advisor no later than March 15 of the spring you plan to graduate.

Two bound copies of your paper will be required for our archives. We recommend the binding services of the company below. Many students and faculty have used their services and were very satisfied.

National Library Bindery Company of Georgia
100 Hembree Park Dr
Roswell, GA 30076-3873
(770) 442-5490
nlbga@mindspring.com

Please be aware that there is a significant lead time necessary for the binding to be done, so do not wait until just a few weeks before graduation.

The hard cover of your bound paper should be black. The lettering on the cover and spine should be gold. The cover should bear the full title of your paper and your full name. The spine should bear your last name and the year that you submitted your paper. The photos below are a good example of what is expected.



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