

Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception

Policies concerning Capstone Projects

Approved by the Council of the Faculty on 19 October 2020 and effective immediately

MA in Theology

To qualify for the comprehensive examination, the student must have satisfied the language requirements and have a grade point average of 3.00 or above. The student usually takes the comprehensive examination during the fourth semester of study although the Academic Dean may allow students to take the exam at other times. The exam has a single written component and its subject matter includes material covered in the required courses in systematic theology, moral theology, and Scripture as well as topics indicated in a special packet that the student will receive during his or her first year in the program. In order to pass the comprehensive exam, a student must receive an average grade of 3.00 on the exam. During the exam, the student will have three hours to write on three themes (theses), one each from the assigned areas of sacred scripture, systematic theology, and moral theology. In each area, the candidate will be able to choose from three possible questions. The student must pass the comprehensive examination before defending his or her M.A. thesis. Students who fail the first attempt of the comprehensive exam, the thesis, or the thesis defense will be able to make a second attempt. However, they will only be able to receive the minimum required passing average grade of 3.0 on their second attempt and will be ineligible for academic honors. Candidates may not continue in the program after two failures of the comprehensive examination.

MA in Thomistic Studies

To qualify for the comprehensive examination, the student must have satisfied the language requirements and have a grade point average of 3.00 or above. The student usually takes the comprehensive examination on the first day of the summer special exam week following the fourth or fifth summer of study, although the Academic Dean may allow students to take the exam at other times. The exam has a single written component and its subject matter includes material covered in the required courses in systematic theology and moral theology as well as topics indicated in a special packet that the student will receive during his or her first summer in the program. In order to pass the comprehensive examination, a student must receive an average grade of 3.00 on the exam. During the exam, the student will have three hours to write on three themes (theses): two themes from the area of systematic theology, and one from the area of moral theology. For each theme, the candidate will be able to choose from three possible questions. The student must pass the comprehensive examination before defending his or her M.A. thesis. Students who fail the first attempt of the comprehensive exam, the thesis, or the thesis defense will be able to make a second attempt. However, they will only be able to receive the minimum required passing average grade of 3.0 on their second attempt and will be ineligible for academic honors. Candidates may not continue in the program after two failures of the comprehensive examination.

M.Div.

To qualify for the comprehensive examination, the student must have satisfied the language requirements and have a grade point average of 3.00 or above. The awarding of the M.Div. degree depends upon the successful completion of the comprehensive examination and a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or above in all required courses. Usually the student takes the comprehensive examination during special exam week following the sixth semester of study, although the Academic Dean may allow students to take the exam at other times. The subject matter is material covered in the courses in systematic and sacramental theology, moral theology, and Scripture. In order to pass the comprehensive exam, a student must receive an average grade of 2.50 on the exam. A candidate for the M.Div. degree may not continue candidacy after two failures in the comprehensive examination.

This examination consists of two parts:

- 1) **Written Component:** A three-hour written examination in which the candidate for the M.Div. will be asked to write on three themes (theses), one each from the assigned areas of sacred scripture, systematic theology, and moral theology. In each area the candidate will be able to choose from three possible questions. The principal purpose of the written component of the M.Div. examination will be to test the candidate's ability to expose theological materials, with the special emphasis (as appropriate) on the pertinent contributions of historical and positive theology. A student must pass the written component of the exam with a cumulative average of 2.50 before being admitted to the oral component.
- 2) **Oral Component:** A three-quarter-of-an-hour examination before three faculty members who will examine the candidate in the three assigned areas. Questions may be drawn from any of the thirty themes. The principal purpose of the oral component of the examination will be to test the candidate's ability to order these materials towards a reasoned theological judgment or conclusion.

Students who fail the first attempt of either their written or oral exam will be able to take the exam a second time. However, they will only be able to receive the minimum required passing average grade of 3.0 on their second attempt and will be ineligible for academic honors. If a student receives below a 2.0 in any of the three areas on the oral exam, the entire oral component of the exam will need to be taken again in all three areas.

Baccalaureate of Sacred Theology

To qualify for the comprehensive examination, the student must have satisfied the Latin and Greek requirements and have a grade point average of 3.25 or above. The awarding of the S.T.B. degree depends upon the successful completion of the comprehensive examination and a cumulative grade point average of 3.25 or above from all required courses. Usually the student takes the

comprehensive examination during the special exam week following the sixth semester of study, although the Academic Dean may allow students to take the exam at other times. The subject matter is material covered in the courses in systematic and sacramental theology, moral theology, and Scripture. In order to pass the comprehensive exam, a student must receive an average grade of 3.25 on the exam. A candidate for the S.T.B. degree may not continue candidacy after two failures in the comprehensive examination.

This examination consists of two parts:

- 1) **Written Component:** A three-hour written examination in which the candidate for the M.Div. will be asked to write on three themes (theses), one each from the assigned areas of sacred scripture, systematic theology and moral theology. In each area the candidate will be able to choose from three possible questions. The principal purpose of the written component of the M.Div. examination will be to test the candidate's ability to expose theological materials, with the special emphasis (as appropriate) on the pertinent contributions of historical and positive theology. A student must pass the written component of the exam with a cumulative average of 3.25 before being admitted to the oral component.
- 2) **Oral Component:** A three-quarter of an hour examination before three faculty members who will examine the candidate in the three assigned areas. Questions may be drawn from any of the thirty themes. The principal purpose of the oral component of the examination will be to test the candidate's ability to order these materials towards a reasoned theological judgment or conclusion.

Students who fail the first attempt of either their written or oral exam will be able to take the exam a second time. However, they will only be able to receive the minimum required passing average grade of 3.25 on their second attempt and will be ineligible for academic honors. If a student receives below a 2.0 in any of the three areas on the oral exam, the entire oral component of the exam will need to be taken again in all three areas.

Licentiate in Sacred Theology

Lectio coram (magisterial lecture)

In early March of the Candidate's second year, he or she must present to the Academic Dean ten theses for the lectio coram. These will be reviewed and corrected by the Faculty. If necessary, they will be returned to the candidate to be redone. Each thesis should contain a bibliography of seven to ten items, generally as current as possible and clearly related to the point of the lectio. This indicates the candidate's ability to pinpoint the relevant literature for the topic and guide those who will be following (and judging) the lectio. The lectio coram consists of a presentation of forty-five minutes before a board of four examiners followed by a ten-minute period of questioning by each examiner. Follow up questions may be permitted after each examiner has completed his or her period of questioning. A minimum average grade of 3.25 is required for successful completion of

the lectio coram. Students who fail the first attempt will be able to present their lectio coram a second time. However, they will only be able to receive the minimum required passing average grade of 3.25 on their second attempt and will be ineligible for academic honors. Students may not continue in the program after two unsuccessful attempts.

Tesina (Thesis)

Candidates are required to complete a successful tesina (thesis). The student manifests competence in methods of scientific research by completing a tesina under the direction of a member of the faculty on an approved topic relating to the student's specialization. The tesina must represent a substantial and sustained intellectual endeavour in the student's chosen area. Following the agreement of a faculty member to direct the tesina and the approval of the Academic Dean, the student submits an initial tesina proposal to the Academic Dean's office. This initial proposal includes a statement and brief synopsis of the topic, reasons for the choice of the topic, and a statement of methodology. The initial proposal must be signed by the director and the candidate. The Academic Dean sends the proposal to the Faculty for approval and comment by the end of the first year of fulltime study. The student and director receive from the Academic Dean any feedback offered by the faculty, along with his approval or rejection of the topic.

A more definitive prospectus of the tesina is due at the beginning of the second year of study. Along with a more detailed proposal, this prospectus must also include an anticipated outline of the tesina and a preliminary bibliography.

The tesina should be no less than 75, nor more than 100, pages of text in length. The tesina grade will consist of the average of the grades submitted by the tesina director, and a second reader appointed by the Academic Dean. The tesina grade will be determined by satisfactory completion of the approved tesina proposal, through an exploration of the state of the question within contemporary research, innovative reflections or approaches to the question, adherence to standards of graduate-level scholarship and approved Faculty style regulations. Students who successfully complete a tesina receive three credits, which may be counted as part of the thirty-six required credits for the S.T.L. degree. Normally, the candidate is to submit three unbound copies of the tesina to the Academic Dean by 1 April before anticipated graduation. No lectio coram will be scheduled before the completed tesina is submitted. In order to complete the tesina portion of the degree requirements, the student must receive an average grade of 3.25 or higher. Students who fail the first attempt will be able to submit their tesina a second time. However, they will only be able to receive the minimum required passing average grade of 3.25 on their second attempt and will be ineligible for academic honors. Students may not continue in the program after two unsuccessful attempts.

Doctorate in Sacred Theology

Lectio coram (magisterial lecture)

In early March of the Candidate's second year, he or she must present to the Dean ten theses for the lectio coram. These will be reviewed and corrected by the Faculty. If necessary, they will be returned to the candidate to be redone. Each thesis should contain a bibliography of seven to ten items, generally as current as possible and clearly related to the point of the lectio. This indicates the candidate's ability to pinpoint the relevant literature for the topic and guide those who will be following (and judging) the lectio. The lectio coram consists of a presentation of forty-five minutes before a board of four examiners followed by a ten-minute period of questioning by each examiner. Follow-up questions may be permitted after each examiner has completed his or her period of questioning. A minimum average grade of 3.25 is required for successful completion of the lectio coram. Students who fail the first attempt will be able to present their lectio coram a second time. However, they will only be able to receive the minimum required passing average grade of 3.25 on their second attempt and will be ineligible for academic honors. Students may not continue in the program after two unsuccessful attempts.

Tesina (Thesis)

Candidates are required to complete a successful tesina (thesis). This is to show competence in methods of scientific research by completing a tesina under the direction of a member of the faculty on an approved topic relating to the student's specialization. The tesina must represent a substantial and sustained intellectual endeavour in the student's chosen area. Following the agreement of a faculty member to direct the tesina and the approval of the Academic Dean, the student submits an initial tesina proposal to the Academic Dean's office. The initial proposal includes a statement and brief synopsis of the topic, reasons for the choice of the topic, and a statement of methodology. The initial proposal must be signed by the director and the candidate. The Academic Dean sends the proposal to the Faculty for approval by the end of the first year of full-time study. The student and the director receive from the Academic Dean any feedback offered by the faculty, along with his approval or rejection of the topic.

A more definitive prospectus of the tesina is due at the beginning of the second year of study. Along with a more detailed proposal, the prospectus also includes an anticipated outline of the tesina and a preliminary bibliography.

The tesina should be no less than 75, nor more than 100, pages of text in length. The tesina grade will consist of the average of the grades submitted by the tesina director, and a second reader appointed by the Academic Dean. The tesina grade will be determined by satisfactory completion of the approved tesina proposal, thorough exploration of the state of the question within contemporary research, innovative reflections or approaches to the question, adherence to standards of graduate level scholarship and approved Faculty style regulations. Students who successfully complete a tesina receive three credits, which may be counted as part of the thirty-six required credits for the S.T.L. degree. The candidate is to submit three unbound copies of the tesina to the Academic Dean by 1 April before anticipated graduation. No lectio coram will be scheduled before the completed tesina is submitted. In order to complete the tesina portion of the degree requirements, the student must receive an average grade of 3.25 or higher. Students who fail the first attempt will be able to submit their tesina a second time. However, they will only be able to receive the minimum required passing average grade of 3.25 on their second attempt and will be

ineligible for academic honors. Students may not continue in the program after two unsuccessful attempts.