



Holy Apostles College & Seminary

Cultivating Catholic Leaders for Evangelization

Guidelines for the Professional Paper for M.A. Students in Theology October 2020

Statement of Purpose

Effective Fall 2019 for new M.A. Theology students at Holy Apostles College and Seminary, students will register for *ENG 890: Summative Evaluation: Comprehensive Exam & Professional Paper (Theology)* which will prepare them for the oral-comprehensive exams in Dogmatic and Moral Theology and to write a professional paper in the student's concentration--Dogmatic Theology, Moral Theology, Thomistic Studies, Scripture, Church History, or Bioethics—the following semester. The Professional Paper will demonstrate a student's ability to conduct scholarly research and write in the field of his or her concentration and to make an academic contribution to that field. Students will be encouraged to submit the paper for publication and use it as a writing sample for admission into advanced degree programs (e.g., S.T.L., S.T.D., or Ph.D.) after the M.A. program.

A complete M.A. Professional Paper comprises approximately 10-12 pages of scholarly writing, plus the bibliography. The title of the successfully completed Professional Paper will be noted on the student's academic transcript.

Requirements to Write the M.A. Professional Paper

1. Enrollment in the M.A. program in Theology.
2. Completion of at least 24 semester hours of coursework, including all required core courses.
3. Completion of *ENG 890: Summative Evaluation: Comprehensive Exam & Professional Paper, Theology*.
4. Passing grade on the Moral Theology and Dogmatic Theology Comprehensive exams.
5. A minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 in the Holy Apostles' M.A. program.

ENG 890: Summative Evaluation: Comprehensive Exam & Professional Paper, Theology

In *ENG 890*, students will study the qualities of an effective academic essay, develop advanced research skills, and identify a research question for their long essay. During the semester, students will research their topic, generate an outline for the essay, and craft an introduction that reviews the research in the field and describes the critical approach to the identified research topic. Students will consult with their Advisor at the beginning of the semester once a research question has been crafted and then will work with the Advisor the following semester to write the paper.

Tuition Costs

For current cost information, please refer to the Tuition & Fees policy which can be accessed from the Tuition & Financial Aid section of the Holy Apostles website. Compensation for the Advisor and/or the Reader will be made according to current HACS tuition and fees policy.

(www.holyapostles.edu).

Process

After completing 24 hours of coursework, including the core courses, and maintaining a 3.0 average, the M.A. in Theology student is eligible to register for ENG 890.

Within the first two weeks of class, each student should contact the appropriate Academic Dean with his or her area of concentration-- Dogmatic Theology, Moral Theology, Thomistic Studies, Scripture, Church History, or Bioethics -- and/or proposed Professional Paper topic. An Advisor is then assigned by the third week of class based on the student's area of concentration. Ideally, the Advisor will be a content expert in this area. Both online and on campus faculty can serve as Advisors for all students.

During the first three weeks of ENG 890, the student develops a research question and tentative thesis under the direction of the ENG 890 instructor. The question is then submitted to the Advisor who approves the topic and question, provisionally approves with recommendations for revision, or sends back the topic and question as not acceptable. The student may revise, but by the fifth week, the research question and tentative thesis for the prospective paper must be approved by the Advisor.

During the fifth week, the student meets with the Director of Library Services for a personal tutorial to review advanced research skills using the HACS Library, and then over the next four weeks, the student conducts research under the guidance of the ENG 890 instructor. The student must identify and collect sufficient resources to ensure that the bibliography includes seminal texts, especially primary ones, and critical studies pertaining to the thesis of the Professional Paper.

The student prepares a bibliography of at least ten to fifteen primary and secondary sources.

The student also creates an outline and drafts an introduction (see below) under the guidance of the ENG 890 instructor.

During this time, the student also prepares for the Comprehensive Exams.

Upon passing the exams and successfully completing ENG 890, the student submits to the Advisor the following within three weeks of the completion of the exams:

1. **Introduction** (300-500 words) that contains:
 - a. **Thesis Statement:** A thesis statement declares in one sentence the specific goal or chief purpose of the Professional Paper. A thesis statement briefly informs the reader of the narrow topic of the Professional Paper and provides its conclusion or some hint of its conclusion.
 - b. **Rationale:** The rationale expresses the significance or importance of the thesis statement. The rationale elaborates the thesis statement by explaining how the Professional Paper will contribute to the field of the student's area of concentration within theology.
 - c. **Methodology Statement:** The methodology statement explains how the student will research and write the Professional Paper. The methodology statement clearly articulates

the type of sources the student will pursue and the manner in which the student will interpret those sources. The methodology statement clearly indicates the disciplinary perspective from which the topic will be approached (e.g., ethics, dogmatic theology, ecclesial history).

2. **Tentative Outline:** The outline provides an overview of the main arguments and counterarguments to be included in the essay.
3. **Bibliography:** The bibliography describes at least ten to fifteen sources (both primary and secondary) relevant to the topic of the Professional Paper. Bibliographical entries must be formatted according to the most recent Holy Apostles College and Seminary's Guidelines for Academic and Professional Papers and M.A. Theses.

During the following semester, the student is required to work with his or her Professional Paper Advisor throughout the drafting process, communicating his or her progress at least once a week during the semester in which the student is enrolled. Failure to communicate with one's Advisor at least once a week may delay completion of the paper.

The Professional Paper will be written according to the following specifications: length of 10-12 pages (up to 15 per Advisor's permission); double spaced; 1 inch margins; 12 point, Times New Roman font; minimum of 10 (ten) sources consulted with appropriate footnotes; and a bibliography, formatted according to the most recent Holy Apostles College and Seminary's Guidelines for Academic and Professional Papers and M.A. Theses. Dictionary or encyclopedia articles can be included but do not count as one of the required sources required. Papers should be submitted as a Word document, in paper and digital form, to the Advisor.

The Professional Paper is read and assessed by the Advisor. During the following semester, the Advisor and/or the appropriate Academic Dean identify a Reader, who does not need to be a content expert. After the Advisor approves the paper, the Reader reads, assesses, and approves the paper.

It is not defended nor presented to the community.

It is graded on a pass or fail basis. A notation of Honors for a paper may be included on the student's transcript.

A signature page, signed and dated by the Advisor and Reader, are part of the final version of the paper. (See template for title page and signature page.)

A print copy is submitted to both the appropriate Academic Dean and the Director of Library Services.

Depending on the student's mode of delivery, the On Campus Dean (for on campus students) or the Assistant to the Chief Academic Officer (for online students) will include the student's name, title of Paper, date of approval, name of the Advisor, as well as when the student passed the Comprehensive Exams, on the Summative Evaluation Google sheet.

Depending on the student's mode of delivery, the Registrar (for on campus students) or the Director of Online Students (for online students) will note the title of the Professional Paper, the names of the Advisor and Reader, and the date submitted on the student's permanent academic transcript.

Title

A Master's Professional Paper
submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Theology
Holy Apostles College and Seminary
Cromwell, Connecticut

By
Student's Name
Date

Advisor
Reader
ENG 890-1

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Title

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Holy Apostles College and Seminary
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By
Student's Name
Date

Approved by:

_____, Advisor
Name

_____, Reader
Name

_____, Academic Dean
Name

_____, Date