LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

DOCTORAL THESIS HANDBOOK

**for students completing
2020-2021 Degree Completion Plans
for
Doctor of Music Education
Doctor of Worship Studies**

MUSC/WRSP 880 Introduction to Thesis Writing Project

MUSC/WRSP 888 Thesis Project Proposal & Research I

MUSC/WRSP 889 Thesis Project Proposal & Research

MUSC/WRSP 890 Thesis Project Defense

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SOM DOCTORAL THESIS HANDBOOK

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide assistance for students pursuing the **Doctor of Music Education** or **Doctor of Worship Studies** at Liberty University who are working on the Thesis Project, MUSC/WRSP 890. This manual includes details and requirements concerning the Thesis project and an orientation to the Jerry Falwell Library. Practical suggestions will be included for each of the components of the project.

The production of an acceptable thesis represents the culminating experience of the Doctor of Music Education and Doctor of Worship Studies degree programs. A thesis is an extended discourse on a research topic of significance in the student's field of study.

As this demonstrates the comprehensive nature of the DME/DWS studies and incorporates the scope of educational and professional experience, the student is encouraged to be thinking about a topic early in the program, formulating possible thesis topics and conducting research related to those topics.

Work on a thesis requires the ability to think constructively and to carry out a program of research that must be demonstrated in the final product. The thesis should be at least 95-120 pages, exclusive of front matter and bibliography. In order to make a worthy contribution to the greater repository of knowledge, the student should choose a thesis subject that will add to and is based in the current discussion of scholars in the field of study. This necessitates exhaustive search for what others have written on the proposed topic. The student should not merely repeat what others have written about a given topic but requires an original contribution to the subject. The final thesis must embody a well-researched position demonstrating critical judgment and independence of thought.

Essential guidelines for thesis form are found in *A Manual For Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (current edition) by Kate L. Turabian and in Liberty University's Turabian Sample Paper for all Students. Additional instructions as to the form and mechanics of the thesis will be given in MUSC/WRSP 880 after all other coursework is complete. Accuracy in form, correct grammar, good organization, and a clear and concise English style will be important to a successful thesis. Students are expected to know and follow the policy on academic honesty stated in the Graduate Catalog.

A thesis is primarily an academic document demonstrating a high level of proficiency in research and analytical skills. To accomplish this purpose, it may be necessary for the thesis writer to draw conclusions with which the faculty are not in full agreement. For this reason, it is understood that the views expressed in students' theses are not necessarily those of the university, the faculty, or the specific mentor or readers who may approve the thesis. The student should recognize, on the other hand, that the thesis is

being written at Liberty University and for a mentor and reader who agree with the doctrinal statement of the institution.

Thesis Purposes

The Thesis Project represents the final element of formal training. As such, it should make a significant contribution to the individual student, the existing body of literature, and to the student's personal current or desired field of Christian ministry. The project must lend research support to a practical application of an applied approach by:

   a. Showing that the Thesis Project is supported by appropriate theoretical basis (biblical, ethical, philosophical, psychological, educational, sociological, or theological).
   b. Describing and defending the project's design and practical implementation.
   c. Evaluating the significance of the project for worship ministry or music education.
   d. Communicating fresh and original understandings of worship ministry or music education to peers.

General Description

The specific research design of the project is dependent upon the nature of the individual project. This design shall be determined through consultation with the project's Advisor/Mentor and Reader. For the DME/DWS degrees, each thesis will be supervised by the project Advisor/Mentor and supported by one reader.

The minimum acceptable length is 95-120 pages. These standards apply only to the main body of the paper, and do not include the front matter, the appendices, or the bibliography. Any exceptions to these guidelines must be approved by the Online Dean of the School of Music.

Thesis Courses

- MUSC/WRSP 880
- MUSC/WRSP 888
- MUSC/WRSP 889*
- MUSC/WRSP 890

*A student will typically be asked to repeat MUSC/WRSP 889 – Thesis Proposal and Research each semester until deemed ready for enrollment in MUSC/WRSP 890.

MUSC/WRSP 880

Students select a thesis topic, which must be initially approved in MUSC/WRSP 880. When writing your Thesis Project title, consider the following:

a. What is the subject you wish to research?
b. Your subtitle should answer the "so what" question; in other words, what do you intend to accomplish with this subject's research that will assist you and your peers in worship ministry or music education? What significant improvements in ministry or music education could be suggested and implemented based on your Thesis Project? The title should not exceed fifteen (15) words.
c. The project must demonstrate an exhaustive knowledge of the existing research, have practical implications for applied ministry, report research findings, contribute to the discipline, incorporate self-evaluation, and include pedagogical implications.

Students also prepare an abstract, which should be limited to 250 words and answer the following questions:

a. What is the topic's description?
b. What is the rationale for topic choice?
c. What is the research approach?
d. What is the potential value of the topic in personal worship ministry or music education?

Finally, in preparation for MUSC/WRSP 888, students prepare a proposal document to include a relevant literature review on a topic that is centered on one of the following types of project: a Case Study, Program Evaluation, Experiment, Historical Study, Phenomenological Study, or Critical Issue in worship ministry or music education (practical in nature). This assignment, as well as other assignments for pre-coursework for MUSC/WRSP 880, will guide the student to delve deeply into the selected topic of interest to gather the academic resources necessary to conduct preliminary research. This preliminary research should help the student examine the current literature to determine the available research on the topic, and the relevancy of the project from a practical standpoint.

MUSC/WRSP 888

Students submit to their Advisor/Mentor the proposal document or initial draft of chapter 1, developed in MUSC/WRSP 880, containing the topic, hypothesis, methodology, and literature review for the thesis. This paper is presented as the thesis proposal and submitted to the Advisor/Mentor and reader. Preliminary approval takes place near the end of MUSC/WRSP 880 in preparation for research and writing in MUSC/WRSP 888. Final approval should happen no later than week 2 of MUSC/WRSP 888. The paper must be presented in presentation format and must be written in the prescribed Turabian writing

style. The paper should be submitted as a Word document, and must contain a title page, abstract, and bibliography of scholarly sources. Accompanying the paper should be a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of the project, its scope, methodology, basis of research, and the anticipated results. This paper, along with a PowerPoint presentation, will be submitted to the Advisor/Mentor and reader for feedback and approval.

After receiving approval for the proposal, students enrolled in MUSC/WRSP 888 will further develop chapter 1, the introduction to the thesis, and develop a completed chapter 2, the literature review. Additionally, if IRB approval is needed for the student's study, he or she will complete CITI training and request IRB approval for the thesis during this time.

MUSC/WRSP 889

Once all coursework is completed, including MUSC/WRSP 880, the student first registers in MUSC/WRSP 888 and then registers in MUSC/WRSP 889 continuously while working on the remaining chapters of the thesis. Upon registration for MUSC/WRSP 888, the student is considered to be in the project phase of their degree. The student then moves to MUSC/WRSP 889 and is required to be continuously enrolled in MUSC/WRSP 889 until deemed ready to defend the thesis. This means that the student must register for the MUSC/WRSP 889 class every semester until ready to defend with the approval of the Project Advisor. If a student does not stay continuously enrolled in MUSC/WRSP 889 until approved to defend the Thesis Project, enrollment is broken, and the student must apply for re-admission into the Doctor of Worship or Doctor of Music Education program. If reaccepted, the student will be required to complete the degree requirements that are in effect at the time of re-admittance.

MUSC/WRSP 890 Thesis

In this course, students defend the thesis project begun in MUSC/WRSP 880. The thesis is a comprehensive paper written on a specific Music Education/Worship topic selected in consultation between the student and approved faculty. It should illustrate a thorough understanding and mastery of research techniques and demonstrate a level of original discovery suitable for work on the doctoral level. Students may not enroll in this class until the last semester of graduate work or until all other course requirements for the degree have been successfully completed. Students will complete a presentation and oral defense of the written thesis.

Securing Project Advisor/Mentor and Reader

During MUSC/WRSP 880, students will prepare the Thesis Proposal and will secure an advisor/mentor and reader to help guide the writing of the thesis. The professor of MUSC/WRSP 880 will provide the student with a list of possible advisor/mentors and readers. The student will contact possible advisor/mentors and readers until securing an advisor/mentor and a reader. The student will submit the Chair Pairing Form to confirm

assignment of the advisor/mentor and reader. The student will send the Thesis Proposal document to the Advisor/Mentor and reader for review and approval. Upon completion of WRSP 880, the student will register for WRSP 888 to refine chapter 1 and write chapter 2and WRSP 889 to write chapters 3-5 of the final document (see articulation above), under the guidance of the Advisor/Mentor and reader.

BUILDING A SCHOLARLY WORK

Step 1: Apply for Topic Proposal In MUSC/WRSP 880

A topic proposal is submitted in MUSC/WRSP 880. After approval of the topic proposal by the MUSC/WRSP 880 professor, begin work on the thesis proposal that will be presented to the Advisor/Mentor.

Step 2: Thesis Proposal Approval – MUSC/WRSP 888

As arranged with the Thesis Advisor/Mentor, the student must submit the Thesis Proposal to the Advisor/Mentor and Reader for review and initial approval during the last two weeks of MUSC/WRSP 880 and final approval during the first two weeks of MUSC/WRSP 888. Once approval of the Thesis Proposal is received, the student can proceed to make application for IRB Approval, if applicable.

For the Proposal submission, the student must create two documents:

1. **Write a proposal paper. This paper must be submitted** to the student's **Advisor/Mentor for review and approval.** Students submit to their Advisor/Mentor and reader the initial draft of chapter 1, developed in MUSC/WRSP 880 containing the topic, hypothesis, methodology, and literature review for the thesis. This paper is submitted to the Advisor/Mentor and reader as the thesis proposal for approval. The proposal paper also has the same information required for the PowerPoint presentation (see below). However, the paper should "unpack" the bullet points that are presented in the PowerPoint. The paper should go into further detail so that the thesis proposal committee is well informed of the intent. The Advisor/Mentor and reader will use this paper to prepare specific questions they may have concerning your research project. The paper should be submitted as a Word document, and must contain a title page, abstract, and bibliography of scholarly sources. The proposal should be between 15-20 pages in length and must adhere to the prescribed Turabian writing style.

2. **A PowerPoint presentation** with 1 slide per item (Presented on the day of the Thesis Proposal Presentation).

   a. **Title slide** with a working title of your project, your name, semester, year

b. **Statement of the primary research question.** State a clearly worded primary research question. Follow the main question with at least two secondary research questions. On this slide you must indicate clearly and concisely the topic about which the reader will be reading.

c. **Significance of the question**. Indicate why we should care about this question. Indicate which theoretical, empirical, policy or practical contributions will your project offer? You must demonstrate the relevance of your study to practical ministry and you must also describe how the study will contribute to the discipline. You should also address any pedagogical implications that could be identified through your research.

d. **Core Concepts.** What is the core outcome or interest? How do you define the main concepts of the study, and how will you measure the main concept?

e. **Working Hypothesis.** Provide possible answers to the main research and secondary research questions. What do you think you might find?

f. **Methods.** How will you collect the data or information for your study? How will you evaluate your research hypotheses? Identify possible strengths and weaknesses of your plan to evaluate/ measure your data/ information?

g. **Research Plan.** Give the precise steps you will use in your research plan. Include an outline for the project, and a proposed timeline for completion of the project. Share any constraints you may foresee in terms of time, budget, and access to data sources. How do you plan to approach any of these constraints?

h. **Bibliography.** Include the bibliography of sources that you have used in your PowerPoint. Do not include your entire bibliography for study; only the sources used in the paper and PowerPoint. Citations should be presented on the final slide, as opposed to footnotes throughout the presentation.

Step 3: **Thesis Proposal Decision**

The committee renders a decision regarding the proposal, and the Advisor/Mentor communicates one of the three following outcomes:

a. **Full Approval** to proceed with no proposal revisions. When this decision is rendered, the student will fully engage the research and writing process according to the established timeline. Upon full approval, the student may apply for IRB approval, if applicable (see STEP 4 concerning IRB approval process).

b. **Provisional Approval** to proceed with proposal pending cited revisions. (This is the most common decision). All revisions must be resubmitted to the Advisor according to the established timeline, and the Advisor will indicate the committee's status on your response to the required revisions. The student may NOT apply for IRB approval until full approval is granted.

c. **Redirection of Proposal**. This decision is rendered in cases that minor revisions will not meet the committee's expectations for the thesis project. Examples of reasons this decision might be rendered can include issues such as:
The presence of a poorly constructed research plan, a scope of study that is too large or too small, a study focus that does not contribute a meaningful extension of the existing research, a presentation that contains a lack of research demonstration of a practical application. Further instructions will be communicated via the student's Advisor. The student may NOT apply for IRB approval.

See Appendix E for Thesis Proposal Decision Form.

Step 4: Apply for IRB Approval

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University exists to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research studies being conducted by or with Liberty faculty, staff, and students. One of the ways the IRB protects participants' rights and welfare is to require students conducting research **involving people or information about people** to submit an application to the IRB prior to enrolling participants in or collecting data for their research project. The IRB will then review, request revisions of, and approve the application once it meets the standards for approval as set forth by the Office for Human Research Protections (a branch of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services). There may be cases in which IRB review and approval is not applicable for the research project, but **only** the IRB may determine this.

It is important to take into consideration the approval timeline for the Institutional Review Board as you construct your Thesis Project Timeline, knowing that anonymous, minimal risk studies are often approved within four weeks while more complicated studies may take six to eight weeks. These approval timelines depend on the quality of the application, the IRB's current application load, and the length of time it takes the student to submit revisions to the IRB. For more information about the IRB, the application process, and to access the application, please visit
www.liberty.edu/academics/graduate/irb/. **Remember your IRB Application must be approved by the IRB prior to conducting your survey, interview, etc. and moving on to writing chapters 3-5 of your Thesis, and that a thesis proposal will not be reviewed in place of the IRB Application.**

Submit draft copies of research instruments and IRB application
The IRB homepage on Liberty University's website includes samples of these materials with a copy of any cover letters. Your mentor will approve all research methods and instruments before they are used. If these documents are flawed, then the research may be meaningless. Submission of these drafts and an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application are done through the Cayuse system.

Once you have submitted your IRB application to the Institutional Review Board, you must work directly with them to modify your application until your application is approved. Save the approval letter because it is one of the required appendices for your Thesis Project.

Step 5: **Use Scholarly Sources**

Research your topic thoroughly and MAKE NOTES WITH CITATIONS. You will save yourself much time and frustration if you keep a running list of quotes, statistics, and studies that are similar to yours in the format provided below.

Make sure that you are using scholarly sources. While other theses and dissertation may be a part of your literature review, the bulk of your citations MUST be from scholarly sources. Read the following paragraphs carefully BEFORE you begin your research so that you can make sure that SCHOLARLY sources (as defined below) make up the majority of your sources.

Definition of "Scholarly"
In general, **a "scholarly" source is one that is written or edited by a "scholar" --** that is, a someone who has earned a graduate degree in the field they are writing about. Having such a degree (usually a doctorate) means the author has had to prove mastery in the field enough to be considered an expert in it. This doesn't mean that the person's interpretation of their field is beyond question or debate; rather, it means that they know enough about the field to have an INFORMED interpretation (in other words, one that others ought at least to consider).

"What is scholarly information; and how do you find it," you ask?
Most scholarly – or "peer-reviewed," or "juried" sources of information have the following elements:
1. Lengthy articles (i.e., **more than seven pages**) or **texts written by experts or scholars for an expert, academic audience** (faculty, graduate students, researchers) in a particular field.
2. **Employ a formal, scholarly, or technical writing style utilizing a vocabulary that requires some degree of subject knowledge**.
3. The author's expertise is usually given near the beginning or at the end of the article or book and **an abstract is included with journal articles**.
4. Sources are cited in footnotes and **bibliography**.
5. Often reviewed by an author's peers (hence the term **"peer-reviewed"**) before publication. It is important to note that the peers referred to here are other scholars or academic experts studying the same academic subject as the author.

6. Purpose of the publication is to share information within the subject field. Articles and books are based on original research and experimentation in science or social science or are the writings, criticism and reviews of scholars in the humanities.
7. **Published by academic presses, professional associations, or universities.** Any advertisements are usually for books, journals, or conferences.

Step 6: Write Your Thesis

The following components should appear in the final document. The Thesis Advisor/Mentor retains the final authority on the nature, scope and organization of the thesis. The thesis should include the following:

Title Page

Thesis Defense Decision Signatures

Acknowledgements (optional)

Abstract (250 words or less)

Chapter I: Introduction

In chapter one you will identify the topic, scope, and research question of the study, establishing the context for the entire document. The following sections must be included:

- Background
- Statement of the Problem
- Statement of the Purpose
- Significance of the Study
- Research Question and Sub-Questions
- Hypotheses
- Definition of Terms
- Summary

Chapter I should give your reader an introductory foundation of your subject and what you will accomplish through your academic and applied research process. You should describe your ministry setting and what led you to initiate this ministry project. Make sure that you have a smooth transition to introduce your next chapter. This is an opportunity to use and cite your bibliography sources.

Chapter II: Literature Review (suggested min. 25 pages)

In chapter two you will summarize and evaluate relevant sources of information related to your topic. The vast majority of your references should be from scholarly sources. This places your topic in context with other research in the area. As you begin your research sub-topics will begin to emerge. Discuss these sub-topics with your advisor and then group information together in a logical flow that helps further define your topic. You must include headings that indicate sections of your literature review (see example page).

Chapter III: Methods

In chapter three you will describe how you researched the research questions. You must describe your methods here in such a manner as to allow someone to duplicate your exact study.

You should identify the kind of research approach used in your project, such as:
- **Case Study-** a research design in which detailed consideration is given to the development of a particular situation in real life that can be studied to learn about practices or concepts.
- **Correlational Research -** a research design in which relationships among two or more variables, without necessarily determining cause and effect.
- **Historical Research-** a research design that presents a systematic examination of past events to give an account of what has happened in the past and must include implications practical in nature. This research design must focus on the interpretation of the historical events to predict future ones. This type of research is NOT merely a recounting of historical events.
- **Ethnographic Research-** a research design in which systematic investigation of a culture's situation or problem generates new knowledge or validation of existing knowledge. This research design requires an in-depth study of members of the particular culture for the systematic collection, description, and analysis of data with the chief end of the development of theories of cultural behavior.
- **Quantitative research** - a research design in which focus is geared toward measurable data. This type of research is scientific in nature and deals a great deal with numerical data and statistics.
- **Qualitative research** must identify and describe research tools, fieldwork procedures, usually non-numerical data is involved. This research design utilizes subjective information that is difficult to quantify mathematically such as beliefs, meanings, or attributes.
- **Descriptive research** - is used to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. It does not answer questions about how/when/why the characteristics occurred. The three main ways to collect this information are:

Observational, defined as a method of viewing and recording the participants;
Case study, defined as an in-depth study of an individual or group of individuals;
Survey methods.

- **All research methods** must include information about the participants in the study, how data was collected, and focus on the description of emerging themes from research.

Chapter IV: Research Findings

Chapter IV reports the results of the applied research, citing current experts in the field of worship ministry or music education. The student will supply an overview of the findings through graphs, charts, and tables. Please keep in mind you cannot use an entire survey in this chapter, but you can highlight the main focus of a survey and place the survey, questionnaires, etc. in the appendices. For example, if you survey a group with twenty questions, you may highlight a minimum of ten most appropriate findings. Make sure that you have a smooth transition to introduce your next chapter. The following sections must be included:

- Introduction
- Results
- Summary

Chapter V: Conclusion

Chapter 5 serves as the conclusion to the thesis project. The following sections must be included:

- Summary: Interpret the findings. What does the data mean? Indicate how the results fit in with the literature reviewed in chapter 2.
- Significance: What are the most important results of your study? How do they relate to other researchers in the field?
- Limitations: All research has limitations. Explain the unavoidable factors that could limit the results of your study.
- Recommendations: What recommendations, applications or actions should be taken as a result of your research and others (literature review) in the field?
- Summary: Write a conclusion to chapter 5 and to your entire Thesis Project

Back Matter

- Bibliography: A listing of all source material quoted, summarized, or footnoted in the Thesis Project. Consult the latest edition of *Turabian* for further instructions.
- Appendices**:** This section can include supportive documentation as required by the Advisor.

- IRB Approval (1 page): An official email/memo or documentation from the IRB.

Step 7: Submit Complete Draft of Thesis

Upon your Advisor's permission, you will submit a completed draft of your Thesis Project as the last assignment in MUSC/WRSP 889. Please remember to utilize a proofreading/Turabian editing service of your choosing before you submit your Thesis Project on Blackboard.

Step 8: Thesis Defense

The thesis advisor should request registration for MUSC/WRSP 890 on behalf of the student once the final Thesis Project has been submitted on Blackboard and approved by the mentor and reader. The defense will occur before the Thesis Advisor/Mentor, Reader, and other faculty that desire to attend. The candidate should be able to answer these sample questions:

- What is the background of the study?
- Why did you choose the topic?
- What methodology did you use and why?
- What did you learn in research?
- What is the significance of the study?
- What are the limitations of the study?
- How did the findings impact you personally?
- How do you plan to utilize the information?

The student will prepare and use a PowerPoint presentation (10 to 15 minutes) that overviews the Thesis. The PowerPoint should provide an overview of the project, its scope, methodology, basis of research, results, limitations, and recommendations for future study. The student should be prepared to answer detailed questions about the contents of his or her thesis and PowerPoint presentation.

Upon completion of the defense, the Thesis Project will be approved, returned for modification, or rejected. If the faculty approves the Thesis, the Advisor/Mentor, and Reader will submit final comments and a completed rubric to Grade Center. The final grade will be posted to Blackboard after the defense and the student will submit the project to the Jerry Falwell Library *Scholars Crossing*.

See appendix F for Doctoral Thesis Defense Decision form.

Step 9: Submit to The Jerry Falwell Library

Once you have successfully defended and completed all revisions, you will submit your Thesis Project to *Scholars Crossing*. Students should review the appropriate Library webpage to get complete updated policies for submitting their Thesis Project. As a graduation requirement, all graduate theses and dissertations must be electronically submitted to the Library. The Library no longer requires a bound copy. Please visit the [Submitting Thesis and Dissertation website for specific instructions.](#)

*If your goal is to participate in the graduation ceremony, usually held in May, you must have completed your Doctor of Worship Studies or Doctor of Music Education DCP, with grades posted, and your thesis project accepted by the LU Library Digital Commons by the first week of April.

RECOMMENDED READING

Badke, William. *Research Strategies: Finding Your Way through the Information Fog*. Bloomington, IN: Universe, 2011.

Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007.

Sensing, Tim. *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011.

Tucker, Dennis C. *Research Techniques for Scholars and Students in Religion and Theology*. Medford, NJ: Information Today, 2000.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Current edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Vyhmeister, Nancy J. *Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.

APPENDIX A

Introduction to the University Library

Liberty University's Jerry Falwell Library collections are available for use by all Doctor of Worship and Doctor of Music Education students. The Library is centrally located on the main campus.

The Jerry Falwell Library provides a wide range of materials and services, employs a group of well-qualified personnel consisting of professional librarians and trained support staff, and maintains membership in local, state, regional, and national library cooperative ventures. The Library www.liberty.edu/library provides a wide range of materials and services, including over 317,000 physical items (books, journals, audio-visual items, microforms), more than 176,000 e-items (eBooks, musical scores, plays, e-audio-visual recordings), and 400-plus electronic databases. Through these resources, students have print or electronic access to over 67,000 unique periodicals, over 1.2 million dissertations and theses, and thousands of other historical documents.

Access to the electronic materials is available worldwide to Liberty students and faculty via the Internet. Students can also obtain journal articles from libraries across the United States through interlibrary loan services. The library will ship books from our collection upon request although students are responsible for return postage charges. As Liberty University Online (LUO) students, graduate students have direct toll-free telephone and email access to library personnel. LUO library services include assistance with computer research, document delivery, and book delivery.

Although most doctoral candidates are only on campus during intensive weeks, they still have use of the Library collections online as long as they remain enrolled in courses. Access is authenticated using your student username and password. The LU Online Librarian is available at (434) 582-2821 for questions.

Students may search the Jerry Falwell Library Catalog https://lucas.liberty.edu for books. In the Jerry Falwell Library, the most frequently used and most recent books are on the shelves. Older materials are stored in a robotic retrieval system. Requesting that a book be retrieved from the robotic storage system just means that it will come to the Customer Service desk in the Jerry Falwell Library. It is does not mean that the title will be shipped to you. In order to request that Liberty-owned books be shipped to your home, you must create an account and request a title through the ILLiad interlibrary loan and document delivery system. Note that many of our titles are available electronically and the full-text may be accessed off campus. Books owned by Liberty may be checked out by doctoral students under the current circulation policies in place for graduate online students. See the Library Research Portal for these details. Protect yourself by using a traceable carrier to return materials.

Because of time constraints, the library will not borrow books from other libraries for doctoral candidates who live outside the Lynchburg area. Students can use WorldCat (www.worldcat.org) to find books in libraries near them. Many academic and seminary libraries allow non-students to use materials on their campus or pay a small fee for a community borrower's card to allow them to check out materials.

While students are on campus at Liberty, the library offers computers with application software such as Microsoft® Word, copiers, and research assistance librarians to assist with specific research questions. The campus computer lab will also be available for computing needs. If you bring your own laptop to campus during intensive weeks, you may have to download a security program to be allowed full access to campus networks. The Library has a number of multi-disciplinary and subject specific journal databases that are available from the library research portal. These include the ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, Christian Periodical Index, ProQuest Religion, Old Testament Thesis Project Topics, New Testament Thesis Project Topics, Theological Journal Library, etc.

APPENDIX B

Thesis Committee Requirements

1. **Thesis Advisor Qualifications and Responsibilities**: The Thesis Advisor/Mentor will work closely with the student to assist him or her in completing an acceptable MUSC/WRSP 888 and 889 Thesis Project.

DUTIES:
• Approve each Thesis Project assignment and provide detailed feedback both via email and within the learning management system.
• Approve all research (i.e. surveys, questionnaires, etc.) and provide signature for IRB application within 7 days of submission
• Respond to emails within 36 hours.
• Uphold all submission dates
• Provide approval for enrollment in MUSC/WRSP 890 *before* scheduling a defense
• Receive Thesis Project submission JFL documentation *before* posting final grade
• Post attendance in the learning management system.

QUALIFICATIONS:
• An earned Doctoral degree from an accredited institution
• Faculty member at Liberty University School of Music
• Approved by the Online Dean of the School of Music
• Extensive knowledge in the subject area of the thesis project
• A thorough knowledge of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers.*

2. Reader Qualifications and Responsibilities: The Reader will work with the doctoral candidate to assist in completing an acceptable MUSC/WRSP 888 and 889 Thesis Project. The Reader reports to the Thesis Advisor.

DUTIES:
• Review and read each step of the Thesis Project
• Provide comments regarding content and Turabian formatting
• Participate in the student's oral defense and provide noted revisions

QUALIFICATIONS:
• An earned Doctoral degree from an accredited institution and/or a recognized specialist in a related field
• Faculty member at Liberty University
• Approved by the Online Dean of the School of Music
• Extensive knowledge in the subject area of the thesis project
• A thorough knowledge of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers.*

APPENDIX C

Thesis Project Checklist

THESIS PROJECT COMPONENTS	COMPLETED
Student has been registered for MUSC/WRSP 888	
Student has been registered for MUSC/WRSP 889	
IRB Approval secured by student, if applicable	
Thesis Project Proposal contains:	
Front matter with a title of 15 words or less	
1. Background	
2. Statement of the problem	
3. Statement of the Purpose	
4. Significance of the Study	
5. Research Question and Sub Questions	
6. Definition of Terms	
7. Summary	
The final version of the Thesis Project contains the following elements:	
Title page	
Copyright page	
Signature Page	
Abstract	
Acknowledgements (optional)	
Table of Contents	
List of Tables (optional)	
List of Figures (optional)	
List of Abbreviations	
The Main Body of the Project Contains:	
Chapter I Introduction	
Chapter II Literature Review (25 pages)	
Chapter III Methods	
Chapter IV Research Findings	
Chapter V Conclusion	
The back matter of the thesis contains:	
Appendices	
Bibliography (min. 30 sources cited)	
IRB Approval/ Waiver Page	
Thesis has been checked for spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and formatting	
The student has posted all assignments in the online class.	
The student has submitted the project through SafeAssign for plagiarism	
The Oral Defense was completed and passed	
The student has made all changes required by Advisor	
The student has submitted the Thesis to the Jerry Falwell Library *Scholars Crossing*.	
The student's grade has been posted to the Registrar	

APPENDIX D

Topic Selection for Thesis

TOPIC SELECTION FOR THESIS
DOCTOR OF WORSHIP STUDIES or DOCTOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION

TOPIC RATING CHART

RATING AREA	PTS	TOPIC 1	TOPIC 2	TOPIC 3

Practical Application (22) _____ _____ _____
How likely is the topic of interest to make implications for practical ministry or music education?

Institutional Interest (12) _____ _____ _____
How likely is the topic to be of interest to the mission of the institution?

Pedagogical
Considerations (10) _____ _____ _____
How likely is the research to hold pedagogical implications?

Availability of
Research Sources (18) _____ _____ _____
How accessible are the primary resources?

Realistic Proposed
Timeline (10) _____ _____ _____
How realistic is the overall undertaking of the topic/ plan within the desired timeframe?

Contribution of Research
to Applied Ministry or Music Education
(13) _____ _____ _____
How likely is the research to contribute extended research support to an application of applied ministry or music education?

Enhancement of Personal
Ministry or Music Education Skills/
Self-Evaluation (15) _____ _____ _____
How likely is it that this topic's research will lead to enhancement of personal ministry or music education skills and self-evaluation?

SCORE _____

APPENDIX E
DOCTORAL THESIS PROPOSAL DECISION

The thesis advisor has rendered the following decision concerning the proposal status for

(Student's Name)

on the research topic title of

(Title of Paper)

as submitted on (Date):

a. _____ **Full Approval** to proceed with no proposal revisions. The student may fully engage the research and writing process according to the established the timeline. Upon full approval, the student may apply for IRB approval, if applicable (see STEP 4 concerning IRB approval process).

b. _____ **Provisional Approval** to proceed with proposal pending cited revisions. (This is the most common decision). The student must resubmit the proposal with cited revisions according to the established timeline. The Advisor will indicate the committee's status on your response to the required revisions. The student may NOT apply for IRB approval until full approval is granted.

c. _____ **Redirection of Proposal**. The student is being redirected to develop a new proposal, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project. The student may NOT apply for IRB approval.

_____

Print Name of Advisor/Mentor   **Signature**   **Date**

_____

Print Name of Reader   **Signature**   **Date**

APPENDIX F

**DOCTOR OF WORSHIP STUDIES or DOCTOR OF MUSIC EDUCATION
THESIS DEFENSE DECISION**

The committee has rendered the following decision concerning the defense for

(Name of Student)

on the Thesis,

(Title)

as submitted on (Date):

a. _____ Full approval to proceed with no revisions. The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.

b. _____ Provisional approval pending cited revisions. The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.

c. _____ Redirection of project. The student is being redirected to take MUSC/WRSP 889 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.

Print Name of Advisor/Mentor	**Signature**	**Date**

Print Name of Reader	**Signature**	**Date**

APPENDIX G

Sample Thesis

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Title of Your Thesis

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the School of Music
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Music Education/Doctor of Worship Studies

by

Student's Full Legal Name

City, State

Month, Year

ABSTRACT

Begin the abstract here and justify left with no indentation. Double-space throughout. The abstract should be one paragraph (250 words maximum) and must not exceed one page. The heading should be in ALL CAPS and centered. Example except of an abstract: This study examined the impact of both high school setting (e.g. public, private, Christian, or homeschool) and formal musical training experience on academic achievement in first-semester college freshmen worship majors as measured by music theory placement test scores. Sixty-six (N = 66) college freshmen at a large mid-Atlantic university took a music theory placement test and a short demographic survey which included information about the student's gender, high school GPA, SAT and ACT scores, type of high school attended, and length of formal music training. Mean test scores fell within the 50th percentile. No significant correlations were found between variables such as high school GPA, SAT and ACT scores, or type of high school attended. However, significant correlations were found between the variables of gender and length of formal music training and music theory placement scores. Results show that female students with at least two years of formal music training scored highest on the music theory placement test. These results indicate that high school academic performance and the type of high school attended are not influential in the performance on music theory placement tests.

Keywords: Formal music training, music theory placement test

DEDICATION/ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS PAGE (Optional)

The dedication page is optional, but if the candidate wishes to acknowledge anyone who has been particularly supportive through the thesis composition process, as well as the entire graduate journey, this is the page to acknowledge those individuals. The acknowledgments page provides the opportunity for the candidate to acknowledge individuals who influenced the writing and completion of the thesis. The dedication page may contain several paragraphs but must not exceed one page in length.

CONTENTS

(not Table of Contents)

(Contents page does not list pages that precede it, such as Abstract or Acknowledgments)

(Highlighted sections are REQUIRED)

LIST OF TABLES

The list of tables is also easily created automatically with REFERENCE tools within WORD. Click on the following sequence: "insert, reference, index and tables, table of figures, (find "caption label" box set as – tables), okay." This can be updated as you revise your thesis by using right mouse button and clicking on "update field." With this approach, there is no need to copy and paste or retype your chapter and section titles. You need to also use the table captions within the body of your thesis (see examples below). The insertion of table captions in this manner also helps because word automatically renumbers the tables within the text when you insert another table in the middle. There is no need for you to renumber the tables manually

LIST OF FIGURES

The List of Figures is most easily created automatically with REFERENCE tools within WORD. Click on the following sequence: insert, reference, index and tables, table of figures, (find "caption label" box set as – Figures), okay. This can be updated as you revise your thesis by using right mouse button and clicking on "update field." With this approach, there is no need to copy and paste or retype your chapter and section titles. You need to also use the figure captions within the body of your thesis (see examples below). The insertion of figure captions in this manner also helps because word automatically renumbers the tables within the text when you insert another table in the middle. There is no need for you to renumber the figures manually

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The following is a great way to organize the beginning of Chapter One:

This chapter will define the overall importance of the level of musicianship in 56 (N=56) first-year worship leaders. Through the use of an online music theory test and surveys completed by each worship leader's worship team, the worship leader's musicianship will be examined in terms of the worship leader's qualities in the following areas: authentic spiritual leadership, music reading ability, pleasing vocal quality, proficiency on a secondary instrument, and many others.

Most churches hiring a professional worship leader expect certain qualities to be present in the worship leader's musicianship.

The main goal of your introduction is to identify a problem that is worthy of investigation. It must also provide some idea of your research goals and approach to research. Specific objectives can be introduced in the introduction chapter or they can be saved for later after you've provided additional background on the topic and state of the current research and its gaps. The Introductory chapter often concludes with a summary of the organization of the thesis, including identification of the general content of specific chapters and appendices.

Ideally, **chapter one defines the overall importance of the problem areas and provides an introduction into what you did, chapter two is why you did it in the context of what was previously known, three is how you did it, four is what you found**

and five is what it all means – putting the pieces together, (what's your contribution to the research field).

It should be noted that the objectives of your research define the OUTCOME, i.e. what will be learned. They are not a statement of the approach or tasks that are required to meet these objectives. Some examples of reasonable research objectives:

- Determine the effect of solfeggio music reading instruction in eighth-grade, nonmusically literate students
- Predict the extent of harmonic part retention in second grade students

These both define the resulting outcome (prediction, effect on…) so they are objectives. The related tasks or research approach could be:

- Perform experiments on eighth-grade non-musically literate students

These define the required steps; they do not define the outcome, so they are NOT objectives.

This template uses the MS WORD STYLES extensively to help keep your work in the proper format. These paragraphs use the "thesis-body text" style that is set for Times New Roman, 12-point font with double spaced lines. There are also styles for headers, equations, captions and bulleted lists that you can choose to use. See examples throughout this template. Margins should be set at 1" left, right, top, and bottom of the page.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review needs to provide sufficient fundamental background information about the subject to support your objectives, hypothesis (or research questions) and

methods, and review the pertinent literature related to the specific problem and hypothesis

you are addressing. Your literature review should answer the following questions:

- What are the fundamental worship or music education and global concepts related to your research (scope);

- What part of your research work has ever been investigated before and what has not, (some of this may have been included in the introduction);

- How does your research work relate to that done by others;

- How have others defined/measured/identified the key concepts of your research;

- What data sources have you used or have other researchers used in developing general explanations for observed variations in a behavior or phenomenon in a concept in your thesis etc.

The literature review should be at least twenty-five (25) pages in length and is not

limited to the above questions only. Bullets can be single-spaced. The above bullets are in

the style "thesis-bullets." Revisit Step Three in the "Building a Scholarly Work" to make

sure that the vast majority of your courses are identifiable as primary scholarly sources.

Headings

There are three levels of headings you may use. Example of three levels of heading/

Subheading:

Level 1: centered, boldface (example below, used for chapter titles)

Turabian Style Subhead
Level 2: centered, regular type (example below)

Turabian Style Subhead

Level 3: flush left, boldface (example below)

Turabian Style Subhead

Turabian Style Subhead

Equations

Equations can be created in MS WORD equation editor or they can be created with other software. Equations should be numbered. They can be numbered within each chapter (e.g., 2.1, 2.2) or they can be numbered sequentially throughout the entire thesis. Equations should be indented or centered with the equation number to the right. The example below and associated "thesis-eqn" style can be used for all your equations.

$$root \square\square b \square \frac{\sqrt{4ac}}{2a} \qquad\qquad [1]$$

This equation was written with the equation editor. Found through "insert, object, equation editor 3.0. The equation editor can also be found through "tools, customize, commands", and in categories, look for insert and in the commands section, look for equation editor, drag and drop the icon onto the toolbar. This editor is fine for relatively simple equations, other options are available for more complex equations.

Tables

Tables should have meaningful information with descriptive headers. You can use the "thesis-table caption" style to define your captions and refer to the table in the text with a "cross reference". Microsoft Word re-numbers table captions automatically when new tables inserted. But you need to right click on any cross-references and "update field" if there are changes.

Table 1: Steps in creating a table

Step #	Instruction
Create table caption	Insert, reference, caption, table
Format the caption	Format, style, "thesis-table-caption"
Create table	Table, insert…
Format the table	The formatting of the table can vary, including use of single space as appropriate. Most journals require that tables are formatted using table style "Table Simple 1" format.
Reference the table from the text	With the cursor at the location you want to cite the table: insert, reference, cross reference, table, label and number only.

Figures

Figures and illustrations are a necessary means of communicating technical information.

Often times, figures included in the background/lit review section are copied from

existing copyrighted information. In all cases, this is technically inappropriate without

also receiving permission from the copyright owner. Citing the source of the figure is not

sufficient. This rule is enforced for theses because they are submitted to ProQuest and to

the Liberty University Digital Commons for electronic access by others. The enforcement

of this rule for MS theses is dependent on the specific committee members. Resolution of

figures is often a problem in theses. Resolution should be greater than 300 dpi, preferably

600 dpi. If you use a lower resolution, you will run into issues when you try to have your

manuscript printed professionally for binding. You should note that saving images as jpeg

files is a sure way to lower the resolution to an unacceptable extent. You should copy

your graphic (for example from PowerPoint or Excel) and when pasting it into Word, use

the "paste special" "as an "enhanced metafile". This also substantially reduces the

resulting file size in comparison with pasting graphs in as excel graphics.

Figure 1: Example photo with high resolution. Caption created with "insert, reference, caption, figure" and the style changed to "thesis-figure caption."
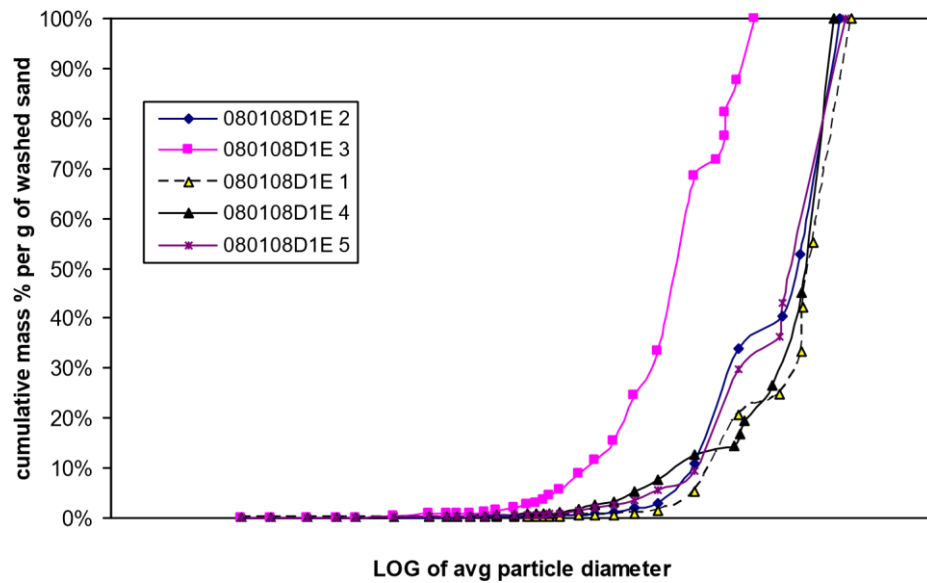

Figure 2: Example of high resolution graphic inserted with "paste special, as enhanced metafile"

Keep in Mind as You Insert Figures and Tables:

- Place table number and title **above** the table; place figure number and title **under** the figure.

- <u>For musical examples only</u>, place number and title **above** it.

- One blank line between the figure / table and any text above or below.

- If the illustration is too big to place within the body of your thesis, place it in the back matter (the back of your thesis) as an appendix.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

In addition to the detailed methods you need to describe in this section, you need to provide specific objectives and an overview of your approach. The best place to put those items can vary among theses. Sometimes the background and lit review is really necessary to justify and substantiate the specific objectives and approach and, therefore, it is best to save those details for the beginning of this chapter.

These paragraphs are in "thesis-body text." Other styles including captions, headers etc. can be used as presented in the previous chapter. Table 2 summarizes all of the styles that can be used with this template.

Table 2: Styles used in this template

Style name	When used
Heading 1	Chapter titles
Heading 2	Primary headers
Heading 3	Sub headers
Heading4	Sub-sub headers
Thesis-body text	All paragraphs
Thesis-bullets	Bullets
Thesis Figure caption	All figure captions.
Thesis table caption	All table captions
Thesis-eqn	Equations
Thesis-reference	Reference list at end of thesis

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter reveals your results and findings. It is best to also reiterate information in your literature review to help substantiate the findings of your research. Do not express any of your opinions in this chapter. No opinions concerning the results are acceptable in this chapter; instead express these thoughts in chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter should include no new information. Instead, this chapter presents a synthesis of information that has already been discussed in previous chapters. In this chapter you should begin with a summary of the study, then proceed to the following sections: summary of purpose, summary of procedure, summary of findings and prior research, limitations, recommendations for future study, implications for practice, and finally, a thesis summary.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Includes all references: articles, media facts, books, reports, regulations, internet articles, and papers that you referenced from the text. In the text, notes-bibliography style citations should be used. The computer software "End Notes" or the MS WORD tools – "insert, reference, footnote, endnote" (or "cross reference" if you refer to the same reference more than once) should be used to help you organize and manage your references.

References can be written in single space with extra space between references as in the format below. There are many different ways to arrange the information and punctuation in a reference listing. The most important thing is to make sure all references are complete and that the format of your references is consistent throughout.

Citation/ Bibliography Examples and Guidelines

Kate L. Turabian's Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations utilizes two basic documentation systems:

1. Bibliography style - use this style in your thesis.

2. Author-date style - Parenthetical citations should only be used when citing scripture within the body of the thesis.

For more information regarding Turabian formatting, please see the following resources:

1. The current edition of Kate L. Turabian's Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.
2. Sample Paper from the Liberty University Online Writing Center

APPENDIX A

Type or paste your appendices here. Appendices are a place to organize and include all of the "extra" material that is important to your research work but that is too detailed for the main text. Examples can include specific analytical methods, computer code, spreadsheets of data, details of statistical analyses, etc. But these materials do not speak for themselves. There should be a reference to these materials from the main chapters (complete details included in Appendix A) and there should be some text at the beginning of each appendix to briefly explain what the information is and means that is included in that appendix.

APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL PAGE

Your official email/memo or documentation from the IRB should be inserted here.