Liberty University
School of Music

Doctoral Thesis Handbook

**for students completing the
Doctor of Worship Studies**

For students on the 2020-21 DCP and following

Revised August 2024

Contents

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to assist students pursuing the Doctor of Worship Studies (DWS) at Liberty University who are working toward Thesis Project Defense (WRSP 890). This manual includes details and requirements concerning the thesis and an orientation to the Jerry Falwell Library. Further, this manual provides practical suggestions for each of the thesis components. The student is encouraged to review the Thesis Checklist located in Appendix C and the Worship Model Practice Checklist in Appendix D.

The production of an acceptable thesis represents the culminating experience of the Doctor of Worship Studies degree program. A thesis is an extended discourse on a research topic of significance in the student's field of study. Composing a quality doctoral thesis requires high levels of application, commitment, and rigor from the doctoral student.

As this demonstrates the comprehensive nature of the DWS studies and incorporates the scope of educational and professional experience, the student is encouraged to think about a topic early in the program, formulate possible thesis topics, and conduct research related to those topics.

Work on a thesis requires the ability to think constructively and carry out a research program that must be demonstrated in the final product. The thesis should be at least 100 pages, excluding front matter, appendices, and bibliography. In order to make a worthy contribution to the greater repository of knowledge, the student should choose a thesis subject that adds to and is based on the current discussion of scholars in the field of study. This necessitates an exhaustive search for what others have written on the proposed topic. The student should not merely repeat what others have written but are required to make an original contribution to the subject. The final thesis must embody a well-researched position demonstrating critical judgment and independence of thought.

Students are encouraged to use Grammarly or other editing tools. Students should not use AI generation capabilities of Grammarly or other tools. The role of LU faculty is not to serve as editors; therefore, the School of Music recommends that students employ a professional editor before their final defense. Students may select an editor of their choosing and at their own expense. Students should be aware that they may be required to re-enroll in WRSP 889 if formatting, spelling, or grammar do not meet expectations for the final submission. 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 high 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 Thesis Committee Chair or reader who may approve the thesis. On the other hand, the student should recognize that the thesis is being written at Liberty University and for a Thesis Committee Chair and Reader who agree with the doctrinal statement of the institution. Further,

students should remember that all research topics must be grounded in related research. A main part of the researcher's role is to avoid bias in methodology and eliminate bias when reporting results.

Thesis or Capstone Purpose and Options

The thesis or capstone represents the final element of formal training. As such, it should significantly contribute to the individual student, the existing body of literature, and the student's discipline in Christian worship ministry. The thesis must lend research support to a practical application of an applied approach by:

- Showing that the thesis is supported by appropriate theoretical basis (biblical, ethical, philosophical, psychological, educational, sociological, or theological).
- Describing and defending the research design and practical implementation.
- Evaluating the significance of the thesis for worship ministry.
- Communicating fresh and original understandings of worship ministry to peers.

The specific research design is dependent upon the nature of the individual thesis or capstone model selected. This design shall be determined through consultation with the Thesis Committee Chair and Reader. One Thesis Committee Chair and one Reader form a committee to supervise the thesis.

The doctoral thesis should be at least 100 pages, excluding front matter, appendices, and bibliography.

In the Doctor of Worship Studies degree, students will have two options for their final capstone: a traditional **Thesis** or a **Local Church Worship Practice Comparative Analysis Study**. Both options require rigor as necessary for a doctoral degree. These two options are further defined below.

Thesis Option

The specific research design is dependent upon the nature of the individual thesis. This design shall be determined through consultation with the Capstone Committee Chair and Reader. However, all theses should include the following components:

- Framework:
  - Chapter One – Introduction, Background, Statement of Purpose, Research Questions, Hypothesis, Significance of the Study, Research Plan
  - Chapter Two – Literature Review showing a gap in the literature regarding the proposed topic

- Chapter Three – Methodology of the research
- Chapter Four – Research Findings
- Chapter Five – Conclusion, Relationship of the results to the Literature Review, Limitations, Considerations for Future Study
- Appendix (as needed)

Note: The minimum acceptable length of a doctoral thesis is 100 pages, excluding front matter, appendices, and bibliography. Any exceptions to these guidelines must be approved by the Associate Dean of the School of Music.

- Defense (Live teleconference Q & A with Capstone Committee Chair and Reader)

Local Church Worship Practice Comparative Study Option

The learning goal for this option is to evaluate a historical or modern local church's worship practice and develop a plan for improving the worship practice in the student's local church ministry context. This can be accomplished through one of three models, which are further defined below.

Research Model A: Historical Comparative Analysis
This model requires an intensive evaluation of the student's local church worship practice and includes a comparative analysis of an exemplary historic worship tradition or practice.

- Thesis Framework:
    - Chapter One – Proposal/Introduction/Biblical Foundations
    - Chapter Two – Evaluation of the (student's) local church worship practice target
    - Chapter Three – Evaluation of a historical worship tradition or practice
    - Chapter Four – Comparative analysis of the modern and historical practices
    - Chapter Five – Conclusion and suggestions for improvement of the target setting

Research Model B: Contemporary Comparative Analysis
This model requires an intensive evaluation of the student's local church worship practice and includes a comparative analysis of a current exemplary worship tradition or practice.

- Thesis Framework:
    - Chapter One – Proposal/Introduction/Biblical Foundations

      ○ Chapter Two – Evaluation of the (student's) local church worship practice target
      ○ Chapter Three – Evaluation of a current exemplary worship tradition or practice
      ○ Chapter Four – Comparative analysis of the two practices
      ○ Chapter Five – Conclusion and suggestions for improvement of the target setting

Research Model C: Current Worship Practice Synthesis
This model requires a comparative analysis of three current exemplary worship practices to develop a plan for application to a local church. This approach does not require the examination of the student's current local ministry context.

- Thesis Framework:
    - ○ Chapter One – Proposal/Introduction/Biblical Foundations
    - ○ Chapter Two – Evaluation of a current exemplary worship tradition or practice #1
    - ○ Chapter Three – Evaluation of a current exemplary worship tradition or practice #2
    - ○ Chapter Four – Evaluation of a current exemplary worship tradition or practice #3
    - ○ Chapter Five – Conclusion and suggestions for improvement of/establishing a new corporate worship setting

The student's primary outcome in each research model is a plan for improving (or establishing) a corporate worship practice or setting (e.g., the church where the student currently serves). Required research skills include text-based artifact analysis, interview and notetaking skills, evaluation of recorded material, and live observation techniques. The student will also need to be able to perform a comparative study of multiple worship practices.

General Writing Guidelines

Students are encouraged to download and utilize the Thesis/Dissertation Template provided on the SOM Thesis/Dissertation Handbook Website. The template is pre-formatted to provide proper pagination, margins, and font. It is designed with section breaks to incorporate this formatting. Students should review the comments provided in the template to ensure they understand the importance of maintaining these section breaks which affects the formatting in the template.

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 WRSP 880. Accuracy in form, correct grammar, good organization, and a clear and concise English style are necessary for a successful dissertation. Listed below are basic guidelines for the structure of the final document.

Length

The minimum doctoral thesis length requirement is 100 pages, excluding front matter, appendices, and bibliography. The research method influences the length of each chapter. The Associate Dean of the School of Music must approve any exceptions to these guidelines.

Font

The thesis should be completed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font. Exceptions are made for tables, figures, captions, footnote matter, etc. Footnotes should be written in 10 pt. font. Italics and quotation marks should be utilized for all sources as defined by Turabian guidelines. Limit the use of **boldface**, except for headings and subheadings.

Margins

The document should be set to one-inch margins on all four sides of the document throughout.

Formatting/Citations

Turabian format must be utilized throughout the thesis. Footnotes should be used for all citations within the dissertation. Refer to the Turabian manual for further guidelines regarding Turabian formatting in theses. Footnote numbering refreshes in each new chapter of the thesis. Footnote numbers begin at 1 and continue sequentially until the next chapter begins.

Pagination

Page numbers should be listed in the top, right-hand corner of the page. The title page should not be numbered. Pagination should begin with the body of the paper proper with page 1. Pages before the paper body should be lowercase Roman numerals (i.e., ii, iii, etc.) listed on the bottom center of the page. The title page is considered the first page (Roman Numeral i); however, no page number appears on the title page of the document.

Text Body

The main text of the thesis should be double-spaced. Exceptions include lists and block quotations (quotations that span five lines or more). Block quotations and lists should be single-spaced and the entire quote should be left-justified at 0.5 inches. Main body text should be left-justified throughout except in the case of headings. The first line of each new paragraph should be indented by 0.5 inches. Footnote entries should also be single-spaced with an extra space between each consecutive footnote. Individual bibliography entries should be single-spaced with an additional single space between sources.

Students should refer to the Turabian Manual and Turabian Resources in the Turabian Format Quick Guide for assistance in formatting their thesis.

Building a Scholarly Work

The student should utilize the following steps in completing their thesis for the Doctor of Worship Studies:

Step 1: Apply for Topic Proposal in WRSP 880

A topic proposal is submitted in WRSP 880. After receiving initial approval of the topic proposal from the WRSP 880 professor, students may begin work on the Thesis or Capstone Proposal to be able to present their argument with supporting documentation and research to the Thesis Committee Chair and Reader in WRSP 888 for consideration for approval.

Step 2: Thesis Proposal Approval in WRSP 888

As part of the WRSP 888 coursework, the student must submit the Thesis or Capstone Proposal and Final Chapter One documents that were originally submitted in WRSP 880. The Thesis Committee Chair will determine when the document is complete and ready for Proposal Defense. This normally occurs within the first two weeks of WRSP 888. As part of the Proposal Defense, the student will also prepare a PowerPoint, highlighting the key elements of the thesis. **Note: Once approval of the Thesis Proposal is received, the student can proceed to make an application for IRB Approval, if applicable.**

The required content for the Proposal submission, PowerPoint are provided below:

The **Proposal Paper** should include the following:
- Introduction (include discussion of the topic)

- Background
- Statement of the Problem
- Statement of the Purpose
- Significance of the Study
- Research Question and Sub-Questions
- Framework (theoretical or conceptual, including Biblical Worldview for traditional thesis) or Analysis Model (for Worship Practice Models)
- Definition of Terms/Core Concepts
- Working Hypotheses (for Quantitative Studies only)
- Methodology
- Research Plan
- Summary of Literature (for traditional thesis) or Biblical Foundations (for Worship Practice Models)
- Summary (including an overview of chapters)

The Thesis Committee Chair and Reader will use this document to prepare specific questions concerning the research. The papers should be submitted as Word documents and must contain a title page and a bibliography of scholarly sources. The **Proposal Paper** should be at least 15 pages in length and must adhere to the prescribed Turabian writing style (see the [Turabian Format Quick Guide](#)).

Students should create a PowerPoint to share with their committee during the Doctoral Thesis Proposal Decision presentation with one slide for each of the nine items listed below. The bullet points presented in the PowerPoint should "unpack" ideas and highlight salient features of the thesis so that committee members are well informed of the purpose and intent.

1. Title Slide – Display the thesis title, your name, semester, and year.
2. Background – Discuss the sources and elements that indicate a need for study.
3. Problem – Describe the problem that must be addressed.
4. Purpose – Describe what you intend to do in your study (not prove).
5. Research Questions – State the research question or questions you plan to ask to guide the purpose of your study (must match research design).
6. Framework (if traditional thesis) or Model (if Worship Practice Model)
   i. Describe, if any, the theories or concepts that "frame" your study (for traditional thesis)
   ii. Describe the model employed for worship practice analysis (for Worship Practice Model)
7. Significance of the Study – Describe without bias how your study may benefit Worship Studies and contribute to the body of scholarly literature.

8. Research Plan – State the chosen research method and the chosen research design/approach and list the precise steps you plan to use in your research plan.
9. 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 PowerPoint. You may cite sources parenthetically as opposed to footnotes throughout this presentation.

Step 3: Thesis Proposal Decision

The committee renders a decision regarding the proposal, and the Thesis Committee Chair communicates one of the three following outcomes:

1. **Full Approval** to proceed with no proposal revisions. When this decision is rendered, the student may fully engage in 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).**

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

3. **Redirection of Proposal**. This decision is rendered in cases where minor revisions may not meet the committee's expectations for the thesis. Examples of reasons this decision might be reached may include: 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, or a presentation that lacks demonstration of a practical application. Further instructions should be clarified and communicated by the student's Thesis Committee Chair. **The student may NOT apply for IRB approval.**

See Appendix E for Thesis Proposal Decision Form.

Step 4: Apply for IRB Approval

The School of Music strongly recommends that all studies involve a human element and, therefore, IRB Approval. A student may identify a problem, develop a topic, and apply a methodology that does not require IRB approval. However, avoiding the IRB should not be a driving force in methodology.

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. The IRB then reviews, requests revisions of, and approves 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 are not applicable for the research, but only the IRB may determine this.

Students should take into consideration the approval timeline for the Institutional Review Board as they construct their Thesis 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 the IRB webpage. The IRB Application must be approved by the IRB prior to conducting any surveys, interviews, etc. and moving on to writing Chapters 4–5 of the thesis.

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 Thesis Committee Chair must 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 students have submitted their application to the Institutional Review Board, they must work directly with the IRB to modify their application until the application is approved. **Save the approval letter because it is one of the required appendices for the thesis.**

<div align="center">Step 5: Use Scholarly Sources</div>

Students should research their topic thoroughly and **make notes with citations**. Much time and frustration can be saved by keeping a running list of related quotes, statistics, and studies. Students should further develop categories and tag citations within categories and seek to identify emerging themes.

Students should make sure to use scholarly sources. While other theses and dissertations may be a part of the literature review, the bulk of citations MUST be from scholarly sources. Read the

following paragraphs carefully BEFORE beginning research to ensure that *scholarly* sources (as defined below) make up the majority of referenced sources. Students are encouraged to review the information in <u>Appendix A: Introduction to the Jerry Falwell Library</u> to aid in their search for scholarly sources.

Definition of "Scholarly"

In general, a **"scholarly"** source is **one that is written or edited by a "scholar"** — that is, a person 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 does not mean that the person's interpretation of their field is beyond question or debate; rather, it means that he or she knows 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 can you find it?" Most scholarly sources of information are "peer-reviewed" or "juried" and have the following elements:

- 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.
- **Employ a formal, scholarly, or technical writing style utilizing a vocabulary that requires some degree of subject knowledge.**
- 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.**
- Sources are **cited in footnotes and bibliography.**
- They are 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.
- The 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.
- **Published by academic presses, professional associations, or universities.** Any advertisements are usually for books, journals, or conferences.

Step 6: Write Your Thesis or Comparative Analysis Study

The Thesis Committee Chair retains the final authority on the nature, scope, and organization of the thesis. Details related to the requirements for the two options (Thesis or Comparative Analysis Study) are provided below.

Traditional Thesis Requirements

Front Matter
- Title Page
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Abstract (250 words or less)
- Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction (suggested min. 15 pages)
In Chapter One, students identify the topic, scope, and research question of the study, establishing the context for the entire document. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction (include discussion of the topic)
- Background
- Statement of the Problem
- Statement of the Purpose
- Significance of the Study
- Research Question and Sub-Questions
- Framework (theoretical or conceptual, including Biblical Worldview)
- Definition of Terms/Core Concepts
- Working Hypotheses (for Quantitative Studies only)
- Methodology
- Research Plan
- Summary of Literature
- Summary (including overview of chapters)

Chapter One should give the reader an introductory foundation of the subject and what the researcher plans to accomplish through their academic and applied research process. Students should clearly introduce the topic and highlight the purpose of their study. This is an opportunity to use and cite bibliography sources. Chapter One should have a smooth transition to introduce the next chapter.

Chapter Two: Literature Review (suggested min. 30 pages)
Chapter Two should summarize and evaluate relevant sources of information related to the topic. The majority of references should be from scholarly sources. This places the topic in context with other research in the area. As students research, sub-topics may emerge. Students should discuss these sub-topics with their Thesis Committee Chair and then group information together in a logical flow that helps further define the topic. Use section headings to separate sources.

Chapter Three: Methodology (suggested min. 10 pages)
Chapter Three should describe how the student investigated the research questions. He or she must describe the method (type of data observed) and design (approach) here in such a manner as to allow someone to duplicate the exact study.

Students should identify the kind of research design/approach used in their thesis, 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 interpreting 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 type of research method lending itself to a variety of research designs in which the focus is geared toward measurable data. This type of research is scientific in nature and deals mostly with numerical data and statistics.
- **Qualitative Research** - a type of research method lending itself to a variety of research designs that often involve fieldwork procedures and non-numerical data. This research method 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 (when working with human subjects), data collection, and how the researcher plans to validate and analyze data.

Chapter Four: Research Findings (suggested min. 25 pages)
Chapter Four reports the results of the research. The student will supply an overview of the findings through graphs, charts, and tables. Please keep in mind that an entire survey cannot be included in this chapter, but rather it should highlight the main focus of a survey and place the survey, questionnaires, etc. in the appendices. For example, if a survey includes 20 questions, students may highlight a minimum of 10 most relevant findings. Chapter Four should transition smoothly and help to introduce the next chapter. The following sections must be included:

- Introduction
- Results
- Summary

Chapter Five: Conclusion (suggested min. 20 pages)
Chapter Five serves as the conclusion to the thesis. 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 Two.
- 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 Five and to your entire thesis.

Back Matter
- Appendices: This section can include supportive documentation as required by the Thesis Committee Chair (blackout signatures and personal data).
- Bibliography: A listing of all source material quoted, summarized, or footnoted in the thesis. Consult the latest edition of Turabian for further instructions.
- IRB Approval (1 page): An official email/memo or documentation from the IRB.

Worship Practice Model Requirements

Research Model A: Historical Comparative Analysis
This model involves an intensive evaluation of the student's local church worship practice and a comparative analysis of an exemplary historic worship tradition or practice. Details of the

requirements for each chapter are provided below:

Front Matter
- Title Page
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Abstract (250 words or less)
- Table of Contents

Chapter One—Introduction/Biblical Foundations (suggested min. 20 pages)

Chapter One is the Introduction/Biblical Foundations for the study. In Chapter One, students identify the topic, scope, and research questions of the study, establishing the context for the entire document, including the biblical foundations for the project. The following sections should be included:
- Introduction (include discussion of the topic)
- Background
- Statement of the Problem
- Statement of the Purpose
- Significance of the Study
- Research Questions and Sub-Questions
- Worship Practice Employed
- Definition of Terms/Core Concepts
- Methodology
- Research Plan
- Biblical Foundations for Corporate Worship (with support from the literature)
- Summary including Chapter Overview

Chapter Two – Evaluation of the Local Church Worship Practice Target (suggested min. 30 pages)

In Chapter Two, the student evaluates his/her current worship setting (where he/she attends), identifying strengths and weaknesses of the current worship practice. At least three targets for improvement should be identified in this chapter. The following sections should be included:
- Introduction
- Local Church Setting/Congregational Makeup
- Current worship order (i.e., "liturgy")
- Current worship musical style/accompaniment, including people involved
- Current core discography of the top 25 songs sung annually (with frequency)
- Other people/roles involved in worship leadership (non-musical)
- Sermon Evaluation
- Rehearsal/preparation overview

- Interview(s) with at least one other church leader (e.g., the senior pastor)
- Interviews with at least three worshipers on their impressions of worship
- Formal observation of a worship service
- Evaluation of the current state of worship practice including strengths and weaknesses and identifying three targets for improvement from this project

Chapter Three – Evaluation of a Historical Worship Tradition or Practice (suggested min. 20 pages)

In Chapter Three, the student selects an exemplary historical model for research. The data for this model should be accessible via sufficient written artifacts, audio/video recordings, and/or interviews with eyewitness participants. This setting should be selected based on an established strength in the area of identified need in the church's Local Church Setting. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Local Church Setting/Congregational Makeup
- Rationale for selecting this model
- Worship Order (i.e., "liturgy")
- Worship musical style/accompaniment
- Examples of songs sung
- Other people/roles involved in worship leadership (non-musical)
- Sermon Evaluation
- Observational Notes
- Audio/Video Recording Evaluation
- Interviews with Eyewitness Participants
- Identification of strengths

Chapter Four – Comparative Analysis of Target and Historical Practices (suggested min. 15 pages)

In Chapter Four, the student will perform a comparative analysis of the two worship settings, identifying commonalities and discrepancies in the two models. Particular attention is paid to the three target areas in need of improvement. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Comparison of the two churches' settings/congregational makeup
- Comparison of the two churches' worship orders (i.e., "liturgies")
- Comparison of the two churches' musical style/accompaniment
- Comparison of the two churches' songs sung
- Comparison of the two churches' personnel involved (non-musical)
- Comparison of the two churches' sermon evaluations
- Identification of Key Observations

- Evaluation of the three target areas in need of improvement

Chapter Five – Conclusion and Suggestions for Improvement of the Target Setting (suggested min. 15 pages)

In Chapter Five, the student will draw conclusions and implications of the comparative analysis to develop a growth plan for the Target Setting. Suggestions for implementation of this growth plan will be presented along with the benefits as supported by scripture. Areas for future research will be suggested. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Restatement of the topic/thesis/research questions
- Summary: Interpret the findings. Indicate how the results fit in with Biblical Foundations established in Chapter One.
- Significance: What are the most important results of the study? How do they relate to other data sources?
- Growth Plan: How can the data gathered from this study improve the three target areas for growth?
- Implementation: How can this Growth Plan be implemented in the Target Setting?
- Limitations: All research has limitations. Explain the unavoidable factors that could limit the results of this study.
- Recommendations: What recommendations, applications, or actions should be taken as a result of this research and others (including areas of future study)?
- Summary: Write a conclusion for Chapter Five and the entire thesis.

Back Matter

- Bibliography: A listing of all source material quoted, summarized, or footnoted in the thesis. Consult the latest edition of Turabian for further instructions.
- Appendices: This section can include supportive documentation as required by the Thesis Committee Chair (blackout signatures and personal data).
- IRB Approval (1 page): An official email/memo or documentation from the IRB.

Research Model B: Contemporary Comparative Analysis

This model involves an intensive evaluation of the student's local church worship practice and a comparative analysis of a current exemplary worship tradition or practice. Details of the requirements for each chapter are provided below:

Front Matter

- Title Page
- Thesis Defense Decision Signatures
- Acknowledgments (optional)

- Abstract (250 words or less)
- Table of Contents

Chapter One—Introduction/Biblical Foundations (suggested min. 20 pages)

Chapter One is the Introduction/Biblical Foundations for the study. In Chapter One, students identify the topic, scope, and research questions of the study, establishing the context for the entire document, including the biblical foundations for the project. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction (include discussion of the topic)
- Background
- Statement of the Problem
- Statement of the Purpose
- Significance of the Study
- Research Questions and Sub-Questions
- Worship Practice Employed
- Definition of Terms/Core Concepts
- Methodology
- Research Plan
- Biblical Foundations for Corporate Worship (with support from the literature)
- Summary including Chapter Overview

Chapter Two—Evaluation of the Local Church Worship Practice Target (suggested min. 30 pages)

In Chapter Two, the student evaluates his/her current worship setting (where he or she attends), identifying strengths and weaknesses of the current worship practice. At least three targets for improvement should be identified in this chapter. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Local Church Setting/Congregational Makeup
- Current worship order (i.e., "liturgy")
- Current worship musical style/accompaniment, including people involved
- Current core discography of the top 25 songs sung annually (with frequency)
- Other people/roles involved in worship leadership (non-musical)
- Sermon evaluation
- Rehearsal/preparation overview
- Interview(s) with at least one other church leader (e.g., the senior pastor)
- Interviews with at least three worshipers on their impressions of worship
- Formal observation of a worship service
- Evaluation of the current state of worship practice including strengths and weaknesses and identifying three targets for improvement from this project

Chapter Three—Evaluation of an Exemplary Modern Worship Tradition or Practice (suggested min. 20 pages)

In Chapter Three, the student selects an exemplary modern model for research. The data for this model should be accessible via sufficient written artifacts, audio/video recordings, and/or interviews with eyewitness participants. This setting should be selected based on an established strength in the area of identified need in the church's Local Church Setting. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Local Church Setting/Congregational Makeup
- Rationale for selecting this model
- Worship Order (i.e., "liturgy")
- Worship musical style/accompaniment
- Examples of songs sung
- Other people/roles involved in worship leadership (non-musical)
- Sermon evaluation
- Observational Notes
- Audio/Video Recording Evaluation
- Interviews with eyewitness participants
- Identification of strengths

Chapter Four—Comparative Analysis of Target and Modern Historical Practices (suggested min. 15 pages)

In Chapter Four, the student will perform a comparative analysis of the two worship settings, identifying commonalities and discrepancies in the two models. Particular attention is paid to the three target areas in need of improvement. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Comparison of the two churches' settings/congregational makeup
- Comparison of the two churches' worship orders (i.e., "liturgies")
- Comparison of the two churches' musical style/accompaniment
- Comparison of the two churches' songs sung
- Comparison of the two churches' personnel involved (non-musical)
- Comparison of the two churches' sermon evaluations
- Identification of key observations
- Evaluation of the three target areas in need of improvement

Chapter Five—Conclusion and Suggestions for Improvement of the Target Setting (suggest min. 15 pages)

In Chapter Five, the student will draw conclusions and implications of the comparative analysis to develop a growth plan for the Target Setting. Suggestions for implementation of this growth plan will be presented along with the benefits as supported by scripture. Areas for future research will be suggested. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Restatement of the topic/thesis/research questions
- Summary: Interpret the findings. Indicate how the results fit in with Biblical Foundations established in Chapter One.
- Significance: What are the most important results of the study? How do they relate to other data sources?
- Growth Plan: How can the data gathered from this study improve the three target areas for growth?
- Implementation: How can this Growth Plan be implemented in the Target Setting?
- Limitations: All research has limitations. Explain the unavoidable factors that could limit the results of this study.
- Recommendations: What recommendations, applications, or actions should be taken as a result of this research and others (including areas of future study)?
- Summary: Write a conclusion for Chapter Five and the entire thesis.

Back Matter

- Bibliography: A listing of all source material quoted, summarized, or footnoted in the thesis. Consult the latest edition of Turabian for further instructions.
- Appendices: This section can include supportive documentation as required by the Thesis Committee Chair (blackout signatures and personal data).
- IRB Approval (1 page): An official email/memo or documentation from the IRB.

Research Model C: Current Worship Practice Synthesis
This model involves a comparative analysis of three current exemplary worship practices to develop a plan for application to a local church. This approach does not require the examination of the student's current local ministry context. Details of the requirements for each chapter are provided below:

Front Matter
- Title Page
- Thesis Defense Decision Signatures
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Abstract (250 words or less)
- Table of Contents

Chapter One—Introduction/Biblical Foundations (suggested min. 20 pages)

Chapter One is the Introduction/Biblical Foundations for the study. In Chapter One, students identify the topic, scope, and research questions of the study, establishing the context for the entire document, including the biblical foundations for the project. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction (include discussion of the topic)
- Background
- Statement of the Problem
- Statement of the Purpose
- Significance of the Study
- Research Questions and Sub-Questions
- Worship Practice Employed
- Definition of Terms/Core Concepts
- Methodology
- Research Plan
- Biblical Foundations for Corporate Worship (with support from the literature)
- Summary including Chapter Overview

Chapter Two—Evaluation of an Exemplary Modern Worship Tradition or Practice #1 (suggested min. 15 pages)

In Chapter Two, the student selects the first exemplary modern model for research. The data for this model should be accessible via sufficient written artifacts, audio/video recordings, and/or interviews with eyewitness participants. This setting should be selected based on an established strength in the area of identified need in the church's Local Church Setting. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Local Church Setting/Congregational Makeup
- Rationale for selecting this model
- Worship Order (i.e., "liturgy")
- Worship musical style/accompaniment
- Examples of songs sung
- Other people/roles involved in worship leadership (non-musical)
- Sermon evaluation
- Observational Notes
- Audio/Video Recording Evaluation
- Interviews with eyewitness participants
- Identification of strengths

Chapter Three—Evaluation of an Exemplary Modern Worship Tradition or Practice #2 (suggested min. 15 pages)

In Chapter Three, the student selects the second exemplary modern model for research. The data for this model should be accessible via sufficient written artifacts, audio/video recordings, and/or interviews with eyewitness participants. This setting should be selected based on an established strength in the area of identified need in the church's Local Church Setting. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Local Church Setting/Congregational Makeup
- Rationale for selecting this model
- Worship Order (i.e., "liturgy")
- Worship musical style/accompaniment
- Examples of songs sung
- Other people/roles involved in worship leadership (non-musical)
- Sermon evaluation
- Observational Notes
- Audio/Video Recording Evaluation
- Interviews with eyewitness participants
- Identification of strengths

Chapter Four—Evaluation of an Exemplary Modern Worship Tradition or Practice #3 (suggested min. 15 pages)

In Chapter Four, the student selects the third exemplary modern model for research. The data for this model should be accessible via sufficient written artifacts, audio/video recordings, and/or interviews with eyewitness participants. This setting should be selected based on an established strength in the area of identified need in the church's Local Church Setting. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Local Church Setting/Congregational Makeup
- Rationale for selecting this model
- Worship Order (i.e., "liturgy")
- Worship musical style/accompaniment
- Examples of songs sung
- Other people/roles involved in worship leadership (non-musical)
- Sermon evaluation
- Observational Notes
- Audio/Video Recording Evaluation
- Interviews with eyewitness participants
- Identification of strengths

Chapter Five—Conclusion and Suggestions for Improvement/Establishment of the Target Setting (suggest min. 20 pages)

In Chapter Five, the student will draw conclusions and implications of the comparative analysis to develop a growth/foundational plan for the Target Setting. Suggestions for implementation of this plan will be presented along with the benefits as supported by scripture. Areas for future research will be suggested. The following sections should be included:

- Introduction
- Restatement of the topic/thesis/research questions
- Synthesis: What are the strengths and weaknesses of these three models?
- Analysis: What are the best examples for a new setting drawn from this study?
- Summary: Interpret the findings. Indicate how the results fit in with Biblical Foundations established in Chapter One.
- Significance: What are the most important results of the study? How do they relate to other data sources?
- Growth Plan: How can the data gathered from this study improve the three target areas for growth?
- Implementation: How can this Growth Plan be implemented in the Target Setting?
- Limitations: All research has limitations. Explain the unavoidable factors that could limit the results of this study.
- Recommendations: What recommendations, applications, or actions should be taken as a result of this research and others (including areas of future study)?
- Summary: Write a conclusion for Chapter Five and the entire thesis.

Back Matter

- Bibliography: A listing of all source material quoted, summarized, or footnoted in the thesis. Consult the latest edition of Turabian for further instructions.
- Appendices: This section can include supportive documentation as required by the Thesis Committee Chair (blackout signatures and personal data).
- IRB Approval (1 page): An official email/memo or documentation from the IRB.

Step 7: Submit Complete Draft of Thesis

Upon the Thesis Committee Chair's permission, students should submit a completed draft of their thesis as the last assignment in WRSP 889. Please remember, it is highly recommended that students **utilize a proofreading/Turabian editing service** of their choosing before they submit the final thesis.

Step 8: Thesis Defense

The Thesis Committee Chair should request registration for WRSP 890 on behalf of the student once the final thesis has been submitted on Canvas and approved by the Thesis Committee Chair and reader. The defense occurs before the Thesis Committee Chair, Reader, and other faculty who desire to attend. The candidate must be able to answer these sample questions (questions may vary from those listed below but these serve as 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?

Following a review of general overview questions, a chapter-by-chapter review will convene as the student will be expected to answer questions from the content of the thesis.

Upon completion of the defense, the thesis may receive full approval, provisional approval, or be redirected for significant modification. If the faculty grants full approval of the thesis, the Thesis Committee Chair and Reader submit final comments and a completed rubric to the Grade Center. The final grade is posted to Canvas after the defense and the student should submit the thesis 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 students have successfully defended and completed all revisions, they will submit their thesis to Scholars Crossing. Students should review the appropriate Library webpage to get complete updated policies for submitting their thesis. As a graduation requirement, all graduate theses must be electronically submitted to the Jerry Falwell Library. The Jerry Falwell 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 DCP with grades posted, and your thesis

accepted by the LU Library Digital Commons by the deadline established by the university, usually in the first week of April.

Thesis Courses

The following courses are part of the DWS degree:

WRSP 880 – Introduction to Thesis Writing Project
WRSP 888 – Thesis Project Proposal & Research I
WRSP 889 – Thesis Project Proposal & Research II*
WRSP 890 – Thesis Project Defense**

*Students may be required to repeat WRSP 889 – Thesis Proposal and Research to gain committee approval for enrollment in WRSP 890. Students must receive approval from the School of Music administration for enrollment beyond three repetitions of WRSP 889.

**The Thesis Chair will determine when the student is ready to defend and will request enrollment in MUSC 890 on behalf of the student.

WRSP 880

In WRSP 880, students will select a thesis topic for initial approval from the faculty member and begin writing their topic proposal. Note that the topic will need to gain final approval from the student's Thesis Committee Chair and Reader once the student enrolls in WRSP 888. The purpose of WRSP 880 is to 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 project's relevancy from a practical standpoint.

In WRSP 880, the students will write a **Proposal Paper** and begin working on the Literature Review and/or Biblical Foundations (Worship Practice Model). The **Proposal Paper** contributes to the development of the first three chapters of a doctoral thesis (in a traditional thesis). Many of the core concepts introduced in the **Proposal Paper** will become the foundation for the Chapter Two literature review discussion and will help define the methodology in Chapter Three. Students must determine both a research method (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) and a research design (i.e., historical, grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative inquiry, descriptive, correlational, experimental, quasi-experimental, survey, case study, or program evaluation) in the research plan of their **Proposal Paper**.

When writing the thesis title, students should 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 may assist you and your peers' worship ministry? What significant improvements in ministry could be suggested and implemented based on your thesis? The title should not exceed 15 words.
c.   The thesis 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.

In addition to the proposal, students will also prepare an abstract in WRSP 880, which should be limited to 250 words, and answer the following questions:

a.   What is the description of the topic?
b.   What is the rationale for the topic choice?
c.   What is the research approach (method and design)?
d.   What is the potential value of the topic in worship ministry?

Reminder: the student will receive preliminary approval for the Proposal in WRPS 880; however, the Thesis Committee Chair and Reader may require updates to this document in WRSP 888.

Securing a Thesis Committee Chair and Reader
A key assignment in WRSP 880 is the **Capstone Planning Project** which is the first step in securing the student's Thesis Committee Chair and Reader for their thesis. In this assignment, the student will complete the **Thesis or Dissertation Planning Form** that describes the planned topic and research methodology for the research. Based on the information provided in the form, the School of Music staff will assist the student in confirming a Thesis Committee Chair and Reader. The requirements for the Thesis Committee Chair and Reader can be found in Appendix B.

Note: Students will not be able to enroll in WRSP 888 until they have completed this assignment.

Upon completion of WRSP 880, the student will register for WRSP 888 to submit their proposal for committee approval, refine Chapter One and write Chapter Two.

WRSP 888

Once all prior coursework is completed, including WRSP 880 and the Thesis or Dissertation Planning Form within the Capstone Planning Assignment, the student registers in WRSP 888. Upon registration for WRSP 888, the student is in the thesis phase of their degree.

In WRSP 888, the student will submit the Proposal developed in WRSP 880 and a PowerPoint. The Thesis Committee Chair may require additional edits to these documents and will determine when the student is prepared to defend their Proposal. All document submissions must be written in the prescribed Turabian writing style. The Proposal should be submitted as a Word document, and contain a title page, abstract, and bibliography of scholarly sources. In addition to the Proposal and Final Chapter One, the student will also develop a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of the thesis, its scope, methodology, basis of research, and potential benefits. The student submits the **Proposal Paper** and the **PowerPoint** presentation to the Thesis Committee Chair and Reader for feedback and approval.

The Thesis Committee Chair and Reader meet with the student regarding the Proposal Paper and PowerPoint presentation to reach a Doctoral Thesis Proposal Decision of Full Approval, Provisional Approval, or Redirection (see Appendix E: Doctoral Thesis Proposal Decision). The student must receive approval from the Thesis Committee Chair and Reader before continuing to write their thesis.

After Full Approval, students enrolled in WRSP 888 further develop Chapter One, the introduction to the thesis, and Chapter Two, the literature review. **Additionally, if IRB approval is needed for the student's study, they must complete CITI training and request IRB approval for the thesis during this time.**

Note: Students should only communicate directly with their Thesis Committee Chair. No communication between students and Readers should occur; the Thesis Committee Chair should initiate and conduct all communication with the Reader.

Upon successful completion of the requirements of WRSP 888, the student will enroll in WRSP 889 to write Chapters 3-5 of their thesis under the guidance of the Thesis Committee Chair and Reader.

WRSP 889

Upon Thesis Committee Chair and Reader approval of Chapters One and Two, the student enrolls in WRSP 889 and is required to be continuously enrolled in WRSP 889 until deemed ready to defend the thesis. This means that the student must register for the WRSP 889 class every semester until ready to defend with the approval of the Thesis Committee Chair. If a student does not stay continuously enrolled in WRSP 889 until approved to defend the thesis, enrollment is broken, and the student must apply for re-admission into the Doctor of Worship Studies program. If reaccepted, the student is required to complete the degree requirements that

are in effect at the time of re-admittance. Students must receive approval from the School of Music administration for enrollment beyond three repetitions of WRSP 889.

Note: Students should only communicate directly with their Thesis Committee Chair. No communication between students and Readers should occur; the Thesis Committee Chair should initiate and conduct all communication with the Reader.

WRSP 890

In this course, students defend the thesis begun in WRSP 880 and completed in WRSP 888 and 889. The thesis is a comprehensive paper written on a specific Worship Studies 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. **The Thesis Committee Chair determines when the student is ready to defend and requests enrollment on behalf of the student. Students will not be enrolled in this class until the Thesis Committee Chair gives approval for scheduling the defense.** Students complete a presentation and oral defense of the written thesis.

For details on the requirements for the Defense, students should refer to Step 8.

Recommended Reading

Algozzine, Bob, and Dawson R. Hancock. *Doing Case Study Research: A Practical Guide for Beginning Researchers*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2017. ISBN: 978-0807758137

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

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William T. Fitzgerald. *The Craft of Research*. 4th ed. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Burkholder, Gary J., Kimberly A. Cox, Linda M. Crawford, and John H. Hitchcock. *Research Design and Methods: An Applied Guide for the Scholar-Practitioner*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2020. ISBN: 9781544342382

Charmaz, Kathy. *Constructing Grounded Theory.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2014. ISBN: 978-0857029140

Clandinin, D. Jean, and F. Michael Connelly. *Narrative Inquiry: Experience the Story in Qualitative Research.* San Francisco: Josey-Bass, 2000. ISBN: 978-0787972769

Claxton, Bunnie L., and Kurt Y. Michael. *A Step-by-Step Guide to Conducting Applied Research in Education*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 2021.

Claxton, B. L., and Dolan, C. L. *A Step-by-Step Guide to Writing a Literature Review in Education Research*. Kendall Hunt, 2021. eBook: 9781792466052, Print book: 9781792466069

Creswell, John W., and Cheryl N. Poth. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Current Edition. ISBN: 978-1506330204

Creswell, John W., and J. David Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods.* 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018. ISBN: 9781506386706

Creswell, John W., and Timothy C. Guetterman. *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. 6th Ed. New York: Pearson, 2019. ISBN 9780134519364

Gobo, Giampietro, and Andrea Molle. *Doing Ethnography*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2017. ISBN: 9781412962261

Guest, Greg, Kathleen M. MacQueen, and Emily E. Namey. *Applied Thematic Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Current Edition. ISBN: 978-1412971676

Mann, Thomas. *The Oxford Guide to Library Research*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. ISBN: 9780199931064

Morgan, Susan E., Tom Reichert, and Tyler R. Harrison. *From Numbers to Words: Reporting Statistical Results for the Social Sciences.* New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, Current Edition. ISBN: 978-1138638082

Peoples, Katarzuna. *How to Write a Phenomenological Dissertation: A Step-by-Step Guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2021. ISBN: 9781544328362

Roberts, Carol, and Laura Hyatt. *The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending Your Dissertation*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2019. ISBN: 9781506373317

Rubin, Herbert J., and Irene S. Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2012. ISBN: 9781412978378

Saldana, Johnny. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Current Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2021. ISBN: 9781529731743

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*. Current ed. Chicago: The 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 Jerry Falwell Library

Liberty University's Jerry Falwell Library collections are available for use by all doctoral students in the School of Music. The Jerry Falwell 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 provides 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 ships 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. Electronic access is authenticated using your student username and password. The LU OnlineLibrarian is available at (434) 582-2821 for questions.

Students may search the Jerry Falwell Library Catalog 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 means that a physical copy comes to the Customer Service Desk in the Jerry Falwell Library. This does not mean that the title is 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 does not borrow books from other libraries for doctoral candidates who live outside the Lynchburg area. Students can use WorldCat 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.

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

Thesis Committee Chair Qualifications and Responsibilities

The Thesis Committee Chair works closely with the student to assist him or her in completing an acceptable WRSP 888 and 889 thesis.

Duties
- Approve each thesis 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 WRSP 890 before scheduling a defense.
- Receive thesis 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 Associate Dean of the School of Music
- Extensive knowledge in the subject area of the thesis
- A thorough knowledge of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*

Reader Qualifications and Responsibilities

The Reader works with the doctoral candidate to assist in completing an acceptable WRSP 888 and 889 thesis. The Reader reports to the Thesis Committee Chair.

Duties
- Review and read each step of the thesis.
- 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 Associate Dean of the School of Music
- Extensive knowledge of the subject area of the thesis
- A thorough knowledge of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*

Appendix C: Thesis Checklist

THESIS COMPONENTS	COMPLETED
Student has been registered for WRSP 888	
Student has been registered for WRSP 889	
IRB Approval secured by student, if applicable	
Thesis Proposal contains:	
Front matter with a title of 15 words or less	
1. Introduction	
2. Background	
3. Statement of the Problem	
4. Statement of the Purpose	
5. Significance of the Study	
6. Research Question and Sub-Questions	
7. Framework (theoretical or conceptual, including Biblical Worldview for traditional thesis) or Analysis Model (for Worship Practice Models)	
8. Definition of Terms	
9. Working Hypotheses (for Quantitative Studies only)	
10. Methodology	
11. Research Plan	
12. Summary of Literature (for traditional thesis) or Biblical Foundations (for Worship Practice Models)	
13. Summary (including an overview of chapters)	
The final version of the thesis contains the following elements:	
Title page	
Copyright page (optional)	
Abstract	
Acknowledgements (optional)	
Table of Contents	
List of Tables (optional)	
List of Figures (optional)	
List of Abbreviations	
The Main Body of the Thesis Contains:	
Chapter One: Introduction	
Chapter Two: Literature Review	
Chapter Three: Methodology	
Chapter Four: Research Findings	
Chapter Five: Conclusions	
The back matter of the thesis contains:	
Appendices	
Bibliography (min. 30 sources cited)	
IRB Approval/ Waiver Page (if required)	
Thesis has been checked for spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and formatting	
The student has posted all assignments in the online class.	
The Oral Defense was completed and passed	

The student has made all changes required by Thesis Committee Chair	
Thesis Chair and Reader have signed Signature Page	
The student has submitted the Thesis to the Jerry Falwell Library *Scholars Crossing*	
The student's grade has been posted to Canvas	

Appendix D: Worship Model Practice Checklists

WORSHIP MODEL PRACTICE: RESEARCH MODEL A COMPONENTS	COMPLETED
Student has been registered for WRSP 888	
Student has been registered for WRSP 889	
IRB Approval secured by student, if applicable	
Thesis Proposal contains:	
Front matter with a title of 15 words or less	
1. Introduction	
2. Background	
3. Statement of the Problem	
4. Statement of the Purpose	
5. Significance of the Study	
6. Research Question and Sub-Questions	
7. Framework (theoretical or conceptual, including Biblical Worldview for traditional thesis) or Analysis Model (for Worship Practice Models)	
8. Definition of Terms	
9. Working Hypotheses (for Quantitative Studies only)	
10. Methodology	
11. Research Plan	
12. Summary of Literature (for traditional thesis) or Biblical Foundations (for Worship Practice Models)	
13. Summary (including an overview of chapters)	
The final version of the thesis contains the following elements:	
Title page	
Copyright page	
Signature Page	
Acknowledgements (optional)	
Abstract	
Table of Contents	
List of Tables (optional)	
List of Figures (optional)	
List of Abbreviations	
The Main Body of the Thesis Contains:	
Chapter One: Introduction/Biblical Foundations	
Chapter Two: Evaluation of Local Church Worship Practice Target	
Chapter Three: Evaluation of a Historical Worship Tradition or Practice	
Chapter Four: Comparative Analysis of Target and Historical Practices	
Chapter Five: Conclusions and Suggestions for Improvement of the Target Setting	
The back matter of the thesis contains:	
Appendices	
Bibliography (min. 30 sources cited)	
IRB Approval/ Waiver Page (if required)	
Project 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 Turnitin for plagiarism	
WORSHIP MODEL PRACTICE: **RESEARCH MODEL B: COMPONENTS**	**COMPLETED**
Student has been registered for WRSP 888	
Student has been registered for WRSP 889	
IRB Approval secured by student, if applicable	
Thesis Proposal contains:	
Front matter with a title of 15 words or less	
1. Introduction	
2. Background	
3. Statement of the Problem	
4. Statement of the Purpose	
5. Significance of the Study	
6. Research Question and Sub-Questions	
7. Framework (theoretical or conceptual, including Biblical Worldview for traditional thesis) or Analysis Model (for Worship Practice Models)	
8. Definition of Terms	
9. Working Hypotheses (for Quantitative Studies only)	
10. Methodology	
11. Research Plan	
12. Summary of Literature (for traditional thesis) or Biblical Foundations (for Worship Practice Models)	
13. Summary (including an overview of chapters)	
The final version of the thesis contains:	
Title page	
Copyright page	
Signature Page	
Acknowledgements (optional)	
Abstract	
Table of Contents	
List of Tables (optional)	
List of Figures (optional)	
List of Abbreviations	
The main body of the thesis contains:	
Chapter One: Introduction/Biblical Foundations	
Chapter Two: Evaluation of Local Church Worship Practice Target	
Chapter Three: Evaluation of an Exemplary Modern Worship Tradition or Practice	
Chapter Four: Comparative Analysis of Target and Modern Historical Practices	
Chapter Five: Conclusions and Suggestions for Improvement of the Target Setting	
The back matter of the thesis contains:	
Appendices	
Bibliography (min. 30 sources cited)	
IRB Approval/ Waiver Page (if required)	
Project 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 Turnitin for plagiarism	

WORSHIP MODEL PRACTICE: RESEARCH MODEL C COMPONENTS	COMPLETED
Student has been registered for WRSP 888	
Student has been registered for WRSP 889	
IRB Approval secured by student, if applicable	
Thesis Proposal contains:	
Front matter with a title of 15 words or less	
1. Introduction	
2. Background	
3. Statement of the Problem	
4. Statement of the Purpose	
5. Significance of the Study	
6. Research Question and Sub-Questions	
7. Framework (theoretical or conceptual, including Biblical Worldview for traditional thesis) or Analysis Model (for Worship Practice Models)	
8. Definition of Terms	
9. Working Hypotheses (for Quantitative Studies only)	
10. Methodology	
11. Research Plan	
12. Summary of Literature (for traditional thesis) or Biblical Foundations (for Worship Practice Models)	
13. Summary (including an overview of chapters)	
The final version of the thesis contains:	
Title page	
Copyright page (optional)	
Acknowledgements (optional)	
Abstract	
Table of Contents	
List of Tables (optional)	
List of Figures (optional)	
List of Abbreviations	
The main body of the thesis contains:	
Chapter One: Introduction/Biblical Foundations	
Chapter Two: Evaluation of an Exemplary Modern Worship Tradition or Practice #1	
Chapter Three: Evaluation of an Exemplary Modern Worship Tradition or Practice #2	
Chapter Four: Evaluation of an Exemplary Modern Worship Tradition or Practice #3	
Chapter Five: Conclusions and Suggestions for Improvement/Establishment of the Target Setting	
The back matter of the thesis contains:	
Appendices	
Bibliography (min. 30 sources cited)	
IRB Approval/ Waiver Page (if required)	
Project has been checked for spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and formatting.	
The student has posted all assignments in the online class.	
The Thesis Committee Chair and Reader have signed the Signature Page	
The student has submitted the thesis to the Jerry Falwell Library Scholars Crossing	

Appendix E: Doctoral Thesis Proposal Decision

The Thesis Committee Chair and Reader have 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)

_____	**Full Approval to proceed with no proposal revisions.**

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).

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 Thesis Committee Chair should 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.

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

_____

Print Name of Thesis Committee Chair   **Signature**   **Date**

_____

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

Appendix F: Thesis Defense Decision Form

Doctor of Worship Studies Thesis Defense Decision

The Thesis Committee Chair and Reader have rendered the following decision concerning the defense for

(Name of Student)

on the Thesis

(Title)

as submitted on (Date)

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

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

_____ **Redirection of thesis**
The student is being redirected to take WRSP 889 again, as minor revisions may not meet the expectations for the thesis.

_____

Print Name of Thesis Committee Chair   **Signature**   **Date**

_____

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