

WRITER'S MANUAL

Guide to the Preparation and Processing
Of Papers and Theses

HOUSTON GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Any writing assignment submitted to Houston Graduate School of Theology faculty should reflect the highest standards of research and scholarship. Consequently, each of these works must manifest the most rigorous standards of content, style, and format. The use of this guide should facilitate the student's efforts in achieving these goals. In addition, some of the degrees at HGST conclude with the production of a thesis. A master's thesis will define a problem or a significant topic from one of the disciplines related to seminary education. It will review important previous work on the problem of topic, discuss controversial aspects, outline and illustrate the main features of the problem or topic, and draw significant conclusions. This manual will assist the student in all of these matters.

The purpose of this manual is three-fold. First, this guide will review the basic principles of research. Second, it will provide students and instructors with general guidelines for the preparation and format of papers, according to accepted academic standards, as well as standards established by HGST. Third, it will guide students and advisors in the preparation and submission of theses.

Although this guide minimizes the possibility for misunderstanding or uncertainty concerning final preparation and submission of class papers and theses, it is not designed to answer all possible questions. The student should consult Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual*

for *Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, seventh edition, on specific matters of style, documentation, and format not addressed here.¹ Robert Hudson has written an extensive manual of style based on Turabian, but written in dictionary format, arranged by topic.² Students will find Hudson's manual helpful for all matters of style and format. For students doing theses in the Master of Arts in Counseling degree program, the *Publications Manual* of the American Psychological Association will offer another usable format that may be more practical for additional graduate or professional activity. The student must follow, however, the guidelines that are required by the syllabus for each course. A counseling student may only follow APA guidelines in courses where the instructor allows the use of that guide, as well as in the production of a thesis.³ The next three chapters of this guide will review basic expectations for research, style, and format.

¹Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed., rev. Wayne Booth, et al (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). On matters not covered by Turabian, the student should consult *The Chicago Manual of Style* 15th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), and Nancy Jean Vylmeister, *Quality Research Papers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001).

²Robert Hudson, ed. *The Christian Writer's Manual of Style*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004).

³American Psychological Association, *Publication Manual of the APA*, 5th ed. (Washington: APA, 2001). The student will find further instruction for the production and submission of a thesis in Chapters 5-6 below.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH

This chapter will examine several important matters for the student writer. A basic explanation of the nature and process of research will be followed by a brief explanation of documentation. The chapter will end with a description of plagiarism and its consequences. The student should use this chapter as a guide for organizing a research project, conducting the research, and documenting the data.

What Is Research?

In *Quality Research Papers*, Nancy Jean Vylmeister defines “research” as

A method of study that, through careful investigation of all evidence bearing on a definable problem, arrives at a solution. To research a topic is to collect, organize, evaluate, and present data. This process cannot take place without analysis and synthesis, for research is more than a compilation of information. The results of research must be presented in a clear and concise way so that anyone can follow the process.¹

This definition is an excellent starting place for a discussion of research. The first element of research is “a definable problem.” Whether a student is conducting research for a five page essay or a seventy page thesis, the research project should begin with a problem to research and resolve. Thus, the first step in research is the definition of a

¹Vylmeister, 1. Valuable guidance on treatment of subject matter and organization of research is given in Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, 6th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2004), and Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). A revised form of the latter source is now available in Turabian, 1-130.

problem. The thesis writer will define the problem and solution in a detailed prospectus (see Chapter 4 below), while the student writing a paper for a course assignment may only define the problem in general terms of a topic and the issues revolving around the topic. Initial research should help the student narrow the topic and further define potential resolution to the problem.

As the definition reveals, the process of research includes not only the collection of data, but the organization, evaluation, and presentation of the data. The student should search for relevant data with the help of bibliographies from instructors and in recent works on the subject, journal databases, online databases, and library searches.² One such source for research is the ATLAS (American Theological Library Association Serials) journal database. The HGST library has a subscription to ATLAS. The database offers HGST students and faculty access to several dozen theological journals online, and it is searchable. As the data are collected, the student should organize the materials for integration into a coherent presentation. This presentation should reveal in-depth research, thoughtful organization, and conversation with the data, drawing conclusions based on the entire process of research.

Research materials need to reflect the most recent thinking in the field, as well as a wide spectrum of past opinion on the subject. The student should update older, even classic, sources with more recent research. Research materials used for support should be scholarly and objective in nature. A student does not need to ignore popular works altogether, but they should not comprise the majority of research materials used. Students should supplement sources exclusively from one limited area, whether theological,

philosophical, expositional, denominational, or parochial, with a wider range of scholarly opinion. The student may use interviews and unpublished speeches as research materials when supported by other more objective forms of research.

Sources for Research

Houston is rich in sources of research materials. The HGST library, Fondren Library at Rice University, Cardinal Beran Library at St. Mary's Seminary, the Houston Public Library, and the Harris County Public Library are all excellent sources of materials. The Presbytery of the New Covenant also has a library that is available to HGST students. Each of these libraries has an online catalog of holdings.³

HGST students have circulation privileges at Fondren Library and the Presbytery of the New Covenant library. An HGST student can obtain materials from the presbytery's library with a student identification card. The procedure for borrowing books at the Fondren Library is more difficult. To obtain materials from the Fondren Library, first, the student should go to the online catalog to search for available books. Second, the student must go to the HGST library and fill out a form, signed by someone in the HGST library, to take to the Fondren Library for each book. Third, the HGST student retrieves the books from the library stacks at Fondren Library. Fourth, students should take the books and the signed forms to the Fondren Library circulation desk to complete checkout. The yellow copy is returned to the HGST library. When the books are returned to the Fondren Library, the Rice library staff will indicate so on the pink and

²The Library of Congress probably has the most extensive collection in the US. The student can access the Library of Congress catalog at www.loc.gov. Fondren Library at Rice University also has an extensive critical collection, accessible in Webcat at <http://www.rice.edu/fondren>.

gold copies. The pink copy is returned to the HGST Library, and the student keeps the gold copy for personal records.

The Houston Public is an excellent resource for HGST students. Any resident of Texas can obtain a free Houston Public Library (HPL) card. Library cardholders have access to all of the books in the library system as well as the use of free interlibrary loans, meaning that HPL cardholders can borrow almost any book available. Cardholders can use the library's website, www.houstonlibrary.org, to search the catalog and manage interlibrary loans. The website also contains links to WorldCat and other online databases that will enhance your research. The HPL location that is closest to HGST, the Collier Regional Branch is located at 6200 Pinemont, which is less than three miles from campus; the Central Library is located downtown at 500 McKinney. In addition, HPL has many other locations. An application for an HPL library card is available at the HGST library circulation desk, or the student can print the application form from the HPL website.

In addition to libraries, the student may consult working professionals in the field of study for aid in discovering and acquiring sources. The student should also see his or her instructor or advisor as a resource for bibliographical research. The professor can often help with some direction, particularly on a major research project.

The Internet, as well as other electronic sources, is a valuable tool in research. Electronic source materials require special documentation formats, which are outlined clearly in the most recent editions of both Turabian and the APA manual. Because no editor, publisher, or reputation is required to publish on the Internet, students must

³Rice Fondren library: <http://www.rice.edu/fondren>; Houston Public Library: <http://catalog.houstonlibrary.org/search~S1/>; Harris County Public Library: <http://catalog.hcpl.net/>;

evaluate web sources carefully. A few questions will help the student evaluate Internet sources. First, is the site sponsored by or related to a reputable organization, publisher, or professional journal? Sites supported by individuals are often unreliable. Second, is the author of the material cited? Reputable sources tend to be signed by authors. Third, is the material propagandistic? Even if the author is advocating a particular position on an issue, a reputable site should present a measure of objectivity. Fourth, is the site regularly updated? Reputable sites should show signs of regular revision.⁴ With expansion of the Internet, diligence in evaluation is essential.

Furthermore, Internet sources tend to be tertiary sources, which are “based on secondary sources, usually written for non-specialists.”⁵ Examples of tertiary sources include encyclopedias, dictionaries, newspapers, and many magazines. The 7th edition of Turabian offers this warning about user-updated resources on the Internet.

Beware of online encyclopedias, such as *Wikipedia*, that rely on anonymous contributions rather than on carefully edited entries written by established researchers. *Wikipedia* has proved to be relatively accurate in the sciences, but overall it is uneven and sometimes wrong. Never cite it as an authoritative source.⁶

At every stage of research, a student needs to keep careful bibliographic records of sources and information obtained from each source. Information on how to do this most accurately and efficiently is contained in Turabian and Brenda Spatt, *Writing from Sources*.⁷ Once the student has determined the outline and the direction of the arguments in the presentation, the writer should arrange the data from each source in the proper

Presbytery of the New Covenant: <http://www.pbyofnewcovenant.org/cgi-bin/rqm/rqm.cgi>.

⁴See Turabian, 34-35; Deborah Core, *The Seminary Student Writes* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), 50-57. The latter source includes a lengthy list of proven websites for research, as well as search engines that evaluate websites.

⁵Turabian, 27.

⁶Ibid.

context of the paper, even at the research stage. This will help the later writing of the paper or thesis. Proper organization of the data will also aid the documentation process, to which this manual will now move.

Documentation

Except as stipulated by this manual, documentation should be prepared in strict accordance with the required style manual. The student may use either footnotes and a bibliography or parenthetical references and a works cited or Reference list. The APA Manual uses a slightly different form of parenthetical reference and reference list system. Section 11 of Turabian contains detailed explanation of the two documentation systems. Below is one example of the differences in the systems.

Footnote and Bibliographical Entry:

¹Peter Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 53.

Enns, Peter. *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Parenthetical Reference and reference list:

(Enns 2005, 53)

Enns, Peter. 2005. *Inspiration and incarnation: Evangelicals and the problem of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

The differences between bibliography and reference list are slight, but important. The primary distinction is that footnotes and bibliography reference books by author and title, while parenthetical reference and reference list cite books by author and date of publication. A further distinction is that the reference list is actually a works cited list (and may be so titled), which means that the writer only lists works actually cited. The

⁷Brenda Spatt, *Writing from Sources*, 6th ed. (New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2002).

student must adhere to one system of documentation throughout the document.

Understanding and applying the proper forms for documentation are the sole responsibilities of the student. The instructor has authority to choose a documentation form for his or her courses, and the student is required to follow the form chosen. The student should expect to use Turabian (and APA for counseling courses) extensively in the course of writing papers.

Plagiarism, Documentation, and the Use of Copyrighted Material

Plagiarism occurs when an author, consciously or unconsciously, adopts another person's ideas or words as his or her own without adequate acknowledgment. Plagiarism thus constitutes the unacknowledged use of someone else's arguments, terminology, or logic in the development of a paper. The following quotation is HGST's official plagiarism policy from the current academic catalog.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the work of another person as your own without giving proper credit for the use of the information. Some common forms of plagiarism include:

- not crediting (via citation) the source or author of a quotation, definition or an important idea used in your paper
- changing a few words or terms in a quoted statement and passing it off as your own work
- mixing unmarked quotations with your own words and putting a single reference at the end of a paragraph
- turning in a paper written in whole or in part by someone else.

Students must not quote books, articles, essays, or internet sites without giving proper credit to the author(s) of the work. The student should enclose in quotation marks and reference the source for any direct quotation of three or more words. The student who is found guilty of plagiarism is subject to a range of consequences, including failure of course work and dismissal from HGST.⁸

⁸HGST Academic Catalog, 10, accessed at <http://www.hgst.edu/catalog/HGST%20Catalog%202006-2007.pdf>, accessed August 7, 2006.

The student should be acquainted with this policy and follow it conscientiously. HGST's faculty and administration will not tolerate plagiarism.

The proliferation of data on the Internet makes the borrowing of material very easy. Students can easily copy (a.k.a. "cut and paste") pages of data directly from web pages and insert the material directly into a paper electronically. The ease of the process has made plagiarism a growing problem in higher education. It has also made faculty and administration more diligent to discover plagiarism and take necessary action to discourage it. The student, therefore, must document and acknowledge credit for any part of the paper borrowed from some other source, whether or not the student uses a direct quotation.

Students often struggle with the distinction between summaries and quotations. The student should enclose any direct quotation from a source in quotation marks, even if the quote is only a phrase or a few words. However, paraphrases and summaries need to be documented as well, without the use of quotation marks. The student must document any statement or thought that is not original to him or her. While over-documentation is possible, it is seldom a problem. When possible, students can include multiple sources in a single footnote or reference to reduce the actual number of notes. However, documentation of borrowed material is not optional.

Limited use of copyrighted material usually does not require permission, but new laws govern the use of such material, particularly with the ready availability of graphics on the Internet. Therefore, the student must take every precaution to gain all of the necessary permissions to quote long excerpts from copyrighted material, to insert graphics, or to reproduce copyrighted questionnaires or other research instruments.

Conclusion

The process of research is the backbone of the writing process. Research begins with the identification of a research problem, a proposal for a solution, diligent research into the topic, and then the production of a well-written and properly documented paper, essay, or thesis. HGST students should follow this process diligently at all levels of their programs. After research, organization, and documentation, the student must produce a stylistically correct project. The next topic of this manual, therefore, is style.

CHAPTER 3

STYLE

While Turabian specifies many stylistic details, the instructions in this manual supersede all style manuals, and every student must follow these guidelines. Turabian, or APA for students in the MA in Counseling program,¹ is the official HGST style manual. No commercial manual, however, can answer all questions that arise. On matters not addressed in this manual, the student's instructors or thesis readers can help with matters that are still in question.

The student should write in a clear and concise style. The student should give particular attention to matters of grammar, punctuation, and consistency of style. The student must also remember that, in academic writing, the writer must use formal English grammar. Colloquial grammar includes forms, terms, and phrases that are not acceptable in formal writing, such as contractions. The student's word processing program can improve the ability to write in formal English, if the student sets the grammar checking function of the program to formal grammar. In Microsoft Word, this is done through the "Tools," "Options," and "Spelling and Grammar" tabs. With Word 2000, the student should set the writing style function to "Formal." In Word 2003 and later, the student should choose "Grammar and Style" as the selected writing style. When the grammar and spell-check functions are activated, many of the style matters in the chapter will become

¹Counseling students should note, however, that Chapter 6 of this manual addresses required adaptations in the APA format.

obvious because the program will mark them in the text. To help with common problems, this manual will now move to a few important style matters, including the use of pronouns, subject and verb agreement, passive voice, punctuation, wordiness, and avoiding bias in language.

The Use of Nouns and Pronouns

Students often struggle with several issues regarding the use of pronouns.

Grammatically, pronouns are used in place of nouns to simplify sentences and remove redundancy. The two problems that this manual will address are the use of first person pronouns and the use of pronouns without clear antecedents.

Use of First Person

Since research papers and theses at HGST are intended to be objective, factual accounts of ideas and conclusions based on research and experience, students should use third person pronouns under most circumstances. This means that the use of pronouns “I,” “we,” and “you,” and all forms of these pronouns, should be confined to experiences the author has personally observed (e.g. verbatim reports). Under most circumstances, students should present personal opinions as fact and proved as such. If students wish to identify concepts as exclusively personal opinions, they should say “in the author’s opinion” or “in the writer’s opinion.” The purpose of making a statement, however, is that the student believes it to be correct. These qualifying statements, therefore, become superfluous, since the thesis is presented as the student’s work.

Instead of forms of “we” and “you,” the writer should choose other nouns to describe the persons under discussion or being addressed. Some possible alternatives are words such as Americans, citizens, Christians, believers, or church members.

Ambiguous and Incorrect Antecedents

Students should avoid the use of pronouns without clear antecedents. This problem primarily takes two forms, common ambiguous phrases with “it is” and “there is” and imprecise use of pronouns. For example, “it is clear” that the “it” in this sentence has no antecedent. “There is” also no antecedent for the “there” in this sentence. These common, ambiguous forms are usually superfluous and students may omit them with no effect in meaning.

The writer should use pronouns in a precise and clear manner, so that the reader can follow the thought of the sentence easily. The following is an example of imprecise use of pronouns. “The pastor and deacon argued because he thought the church had made a bad decision.” A better sentence would be, “The deacon thought the pastor had made a bad decision, and the two men argued.” Furthermore, pronouns and their references must also agree in number. A common, but incorrect, occurrence is to use plural pronouns (often seen by the writer as collective) with singular antecedents, for example, “The manager should always be honest with their employees.” In this sentence, “manager” is singular, but its pronoun replacement, “their,” is plural. Possible corrections for this sentence include, “A manager should always be honest with his or her employees,” or “Managers should always be honest with their employees.” The student writer must proofread carefully, paying close attention to the use of pronouns. If a reader might question the antecedent of a pronoun, then the student should reconfigure the sentence.

Subject-Verb Agreement

In order for a sentence to be grammatically correct, the subject and verb must both be singular or plural. In other words, the subject and verb must agree with one another in number. If the subject is in plural form, the verb should also be in plural form (and vice versa). To ensure subject-verb agreement, the student should identify the main subject and verb in the sentence, then check to see if they are either both plural or both singular. The student must remember that colloquial use of language is often incorrect.

Another common style problem in academic writing is agreement of past and present in citation of sources. In other words, does the writer cite Walter Brueggemann with “Brueggemann wrote” or “Brueggemann writes”? Accepted convention on this matter varies, but probably the most important matter for the student is consistency. The writer should not vacillate between past and present in reference to cited authors. A related issue is the personification of works. A book cannot “say” or “argue” anything, since it is an inanimate object. Rather, the author “says,” “writes,” or “argues.”

Passive and Active Voice

In formal writing, the student should avoid passive voice unless the result of avoiding passive voice is a stilted, unnatural sentence. In sentences written in passive voice, the subject receives the action expressed in the verb; meaning that the subject is acted upon. The agent performing the action may appear in a “by the . . .” phrase or may be omitted. A passive sentence is, “The boy was bitten by the dog.” The student would make this sentence active by writing, “The dog bit the boy.” In scientific, academic writing, passive voice is more readily accepted since using it allows one to write without using personal pronouns or the names of particular researchers as the subjects of

sentences. This practice helps to create the appearance of an objective, fact-based discourse because writers can present research and conclusions without attributing them to particular agents. Nevertheless, the student should avoid passive voice where possible without causing other style or grammatical problems.

Punctuation

In this chapter, the manual will explain the use of four common punctuation marks: the period, comma, semi-colon, and em dash. These punctuation marks have specific uses that students do not always recognize. Much of this discussion of punctuation could be construed as formatting rather than style, which would place it into the context of the following chapter. However, for ease of usage, this section will include all punctuation matters.

Period

The obvious use of the period is at the conclusion of a sentence. Since this use of the period is obvious, this manual will address only the matter of spacing. According to Turabian and APA, only one typed space follows a period. This is a change from earlier convention, and students whose education began several years ago should recognize this change.

A second use of periods is in ellipses. Writers use ellipsis points to mark omitted text in a quotation. Ellipses are not needed at the beginning of a quotation, and seldom at the end of a quotation. Instructions for ellipses are contained in Turabian 25.3.2. Under normal conditions, an ellipsis consists of three spaced dots—a dot and a space three times. If the ellipsis follows the sentence, four spaced dots are used. Word processing

programs, such as Microsoft Word, will automatically format ellipses if the student types three consecutive periods.

Comma

Commas mark minor breaks in a sentence. Writers use a comma before the conjunction in sentences with two or more independent clauses. The student may omit the comma when the compound sentence is short and clarity is not an issue. The student should also use commas to separate three or more elements in a list. Style guides do not all agree on the use of the comma before the conjunction in a list. According to Turabian, however, writers should place the comma before the conjunction. This is an example of a sentence with a list of three elements: The church board, congregation, and staff all agreed to repave the parking lot. When a dependent clause or a participial or prepositional phrase begins a sentence, a comma follows it. For more about commas, see Turabian 21.2.

A common problem that involved commas is the run-on sentence. A run-on sentence actually contains two (or more) complete sentences without the proper punctuation to create separate sentences. Two forms of the run-on are common: (1) the "comma splice" in which a comma is inserted between two complete sentences where a period should actually be used; (2) a lack of punctuation where a semi-colon or period is needed. On his website, Jack Lynch offers this example for a run-on sentence, and solutions to the problem. "The semester runs through April, the break begins in May." There are a number of ways of fixing this comma splice: "The semester runs through April. The break begins in May"; "The semester runs through April, and the break begins

in May”; “The semester runs through April; the break begins in May”; “The semester runs through April, whereas the break begins in May.”²

Semi-Colon and Colon

The semicolon marks a greater break in the continuity of a sentence than does a comma. The student should use semi-colons between parts of a compound sentence (two or more independent clauses) when they are not connected by a conjunction, or if the two clauses are long or include commas within them (Turabian 21.3). The transitional words hence, however, indeed, then, and thus are preceded by semi-colons and followed by a comma; however, but, yet, and so are preceded by a comma.

The colon indicates a greater discontinuity than the semi-colon. Students should use the colon to introduce clauses or phrases that expand or clarify the meaning of what precedes it. Colons also introduce formal statements, whether quoted or not (Turabian 21.4). The student must carefully consider the use of commas, semi-colons, and colons in the text of a paper or thesis. Normally, a writer will use many more commas than semi-colons, and only rarely use colons, unless several block quotations are included.

Hyphen and em dash

A hyphen combines two words that make up a compound word. A hyphen also separates numbers in a series (e.g. 3-7), although typesetters use an en dash, which is shorter than the em dash below. An em dash, which most people call simply a dash, may be formed by typing two dashes with no space in between (Turabian 21.7).³ Some word

²Jack Lynch, “Guide to Grammar and Style,” available at <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/index.html>, accessed Aug. 14, 2006.

processors, such as Microsoft Word, automatically convert two hyphens followed by text into an em dash (i.e. -- becomes –when followed by text). The em dash may indicate a sudden break in thought that disrupts the sentence structure. The em dash may introduce an element that emphasizes or explains the main clause through repetition of one or more key words. This sentence is an example of the correct use of a dash: Seek the wisdom from above—wisdom that is pure and peaceable.

Quotation marks

The student should use double quotation marks at all times, except for the occasion when a quote is contained within a quote (see Turabian 21.10-11). The following is an example from 1 Kings 5:5: “I intend, therefore, to build a temple for the Name of the LORD my God, as the LORD told my father David, when he said, ‘Your son whom I will put on the throne in your place will build the temple for my Name.’” The student should note also that the period, as is the comma, is always placed inside the quotation mark. Colons and semi-colons are always placed outside the quotation mark. The student should place a question or exclamation mark inside the quotation mark if the punctuation is a part of the quotation. For example, he asked, “Where did you go?” is an example with the question mark as part of the quotation. However, did he say, “You can not go”? is an example of a question mark outside the quotation mark. The correct use of punctuation with quotation marks requires diligence on the part of the student.

The student should block quotations if they are composed of five or more lines of prose text or two or more lines of poetry or dialogue (Turabian 7.5, 25.2—this is a major

³See <http://www.getitwriteonline.com/archive/091502.htm> for more information on the use of the em dash, en dash, and hyphen.

change in 7th edition), or more than 40 words (APA 3.34). Students should use block quotations sparingly. Long quotations rarely add to the content of a paper or thesis. The writer should only use a block quotation when the long quotation is significant enough to require full citation rather than summary. The student should not over-quote. Synthesis and summary are preferable to long or numerous quotations.

Wordiness and General Writing Style

One of the most efficient ways to improve writing is to edit it for conciseness. During the process of writing, many writers become wordy as they seek the best wording for an idea. Conversely, students may use more words than necessary in order to meet an instructor's requirements for a paper. Students should learn to recognize unnecessary words and edit them out. Following are some common patterns of wordiness, with sensible things to do about them.⁴ First, writers often double words that have the same meaning: mutual agreement (=agreement); future prospects (=prospects); consensus of opinion (=consensus); reconsider again (reconsider); whether or not (whether); inadvertent error (error). The writer can delete one word in each word pair without altering the meaning. In such cases, the student should use economy of language. Another area where the writer should practice economy of language is the use of intensifiers or qualifiers. The student can omit these qualifiers, or offer specific explanation in place of the meaningless word or phrase: very, really, extremely, definitely, a considerable amount of, and to a certain extent. Jack Lynch offers this further list: quite, as it were, moreover, it can be seen that, it has been indicated that, basically, essentially, totally,

⁴Thanks to Becky Towne for this list, and the organization of much of this material. See also Margaret Procter, "Wordiness and Ways to React" (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2006), available from <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/wordines.html>, Internet, accessed on August 14, 2006.

completely, it should be remembered that, it should be noted that, thus, it is imperative that, and at the present moment in time. Lynch concluded, “These are fine in their place, but they often slither into your writing with the sinister purpose of tempting you into the sin of padding your sentences.”⁵ The student must learn to recognize superfluous words and phrases and omit them.

Students should avoid two other common problems in writing style—clichés and jargon. Clichés are overused, trite words or phrases that have no meaning to the majority of readers or have lost their meaning through overuse. Jargon is similar to cliché. Jargon is language used only in certain circles, such as medical jargon or legal jargon. Christians use both clichés and jargon. A sample list of some Christian clichés and jargon include: abundant life, born again, daily walk, burden on my heart, den of iniquity, get into the Word, moved by the Spirit, prayer warrior, spoke to my heart, soul winning, Spirit-led, and prayed up.⁶ Students should avoid clichéd language and jargon in their writing.

Use of Scripture

Since theological students tend to incorporate scripture into theses, the manual will offer a few words of guidance. First, students should only quote scripture if it is relevant to the topic and applicable to the current discussion. Second, they should integrate scripture references into the text of the document, not randomly place scripture texts outside of the immediate context. Third, simply retelling Biblical stories, or any story for that matter, should be avoided. A student can summarize biblical stories, but

⁵Lynch, <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/w.html#wasted>.

⁶For a further list of Christian jargon, see Hudson, 247-248.

analysis should accompany this summarization or the retelling should be necessary and used to prove a particular point.

Confidentiality

HGST acknowledges that students with practical experience in ministry or counseling may wish to use portions of their own case studies or reports of actual incidents or dialogue they have observed. As an institution, HGST is ethically bound to preserve confidentiality in all cases, whether or not they concern students of the institution. There are two possible methods of preserving both factuality and confidentiality in the use of sensitive material. Either initials can be used or the names can simply be changed. No matter which method is used, the student should change places and occupations in a manner sufficient to disguise the client's identity without destroying factual value. For example, if the client is a first grade teacher, he can become simply a teacher. If he lives in Houston, he can simply be identified as a Texas resident. If the student disguises the identity of persons in this manner, a statement should be placed in the preface outlining the method used and the reason for it.

Avoiding Bias in Language

Avoiding bias in language is a major topic in many circles of the academic world. HGST does not have a statement of specific policy for avoiding bias in language. If avoiding such bias is an issue for the student's business, professional, or ecclesiastical career, the student should consult the APA manual, sections 2.13-2.17, which has a clear and detailed statement of how to avoid various types of gender, ethnic, and labeling bias. HGST also does not require students to avoid using masculine pronouns for God by such

devices as repeating the name. However, students' own denominations may have such policies. If the denomination has such a policy, the student may desire to discover the details of this policy in order to be consistent in writing styles when moving from the academic to the ecclesiastical context.

Matters of style are difficult to master. In fact, the student will never master all matters of style and grammar. The student should become familiar, however, with many of the basic rules and common problems mentioned in this chapter. Further assistance on style matters is available in Turabian, the APA manual, and several websites mentioned in this chapter. This manual next includes the closely related topic of format.

CHAPTER 4

FORMAT

Formatting refers to the presentation of the document. It includes margins, pagination, documentation forms, organization of the document, and forms of special pages, such as the title page and contents Page. Since formats vary between style guides, the student should adhere to Turabian in all matters of form (APA for counseling students will be discussed below in Chapter 6). This manual will only discuss a few important and sometimes confusing matters.

Documentation

One important matter of format is documentation of sources. The basic issue of documentation was discussed in Chapter 2 of this manual.¹ In the present chapter, the student will learn to document different types of sources. The manual will include only a few examples, but the student will find many others in Turabian, chapters 15-19. The student needs to be aware of several factors in documentation. First, the student should be consistent. The writer should choose a documentation form—footnotes or parenthetical references—and use that format throughout the paper or thesis. The student should ask each instructor which documentation format he or she prefers, if it is not stated in the syllabus.

¹See above, p. 8.

Second, the student must recognize the type of document he or she is using and document that source accordingly. Books with single authors, books with multiple authors, books in series, books of collections of essays, hard copy and electronic journal articles, online databases, dictionaries, and websites all have different forms of documentation, since they contain different publication matters that the reader needs to know. Turabian and the APA Manual offer explicit directions for citation, including many examples for the student to follow. Turabian includes templates of basic patterns for footnotes and bibliography entries, shortened references, parenthetical citations, and reference list entries.² One important change in the seventh edition of Turabian is that multiple references by a single author in a Bibliography or Reference List begin with three em dashes, rather than the author's name or a one-inch underscore, as in previous editions of Turabian. The student will find examples of this usage in the Bibliography of this manual. The student should expect to use the correct form guide, as well as this manual, extensively.

Before offering a few examples, this manual will review some documentation basics. Basic information needed for books includes: author or authors, editor or editors, title, edition (e.g. revised, numbered, paperback, reprint), translator or translators, author of foreword or introduction, series name, series editor, place of publication, publisher, and date of publication. Journal articles include article title, journal title, volume, number, date of issue, and page numbers of article. A footnote or parenthetical reference should include a page number, page numbers, chapter number, or *passim*, the latter two used sparingly. In the facts of publication, students should abbreviate state names according to

²Turabian, 143-145, 156-157, and 218-220, respectively.

US Postal System abbreviations “if the city of publication might be unknown to readers or confused with another city of the same name.”³ Cities such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Boston, Houston, Louisville, and Philadelphia are obvious, as are cities within certain fields, such as Grand Rapids for theological and biblical writers. Students may shorten names of publishing companies, such as Eerdmans for William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, but consistency is very important. Below are a few examples from Turabian, including footnote-bibliography and parenthetical-reference list formats. Because Turabian contains no clear examples for some forms for theological and biblical studies sources, examples include forms for commentaries and Bible dictionaries.

Books with single author

First footnote:

¹Brevard S. Childs, *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 154.

Second footnote immediately following if on the same page:

²Ibid., 160. [Omit page number if it is identical with previous footnote.]

Second footnote with intervening references:

⁴Childs, *Struggle*, 160. [If this is the only reference by Childs, the student may omit the shortened title.]

bibliography:

Childs, Brevard S. *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

Parenthetical Reference:

(Childs 2004, 154) [Periods follow the parenthetical reference, except after a blocked quotation.]

Reference List:

Childs, Brevard S. 2004. *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

³Turabian, 17.1.6.

Books with Multiple Authors, Editor, and Translator

Footnote:

¹Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, eds., *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, trans. Daniel P. Bailey (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 201. [This example has an editor as author. If the author is not editor, the student would omit “, eds.” Without a translator, omit “, trans. Daniel P. Bailey.” If the book has four or more authors, list only the first author followed by “*et al.*”]

Bibliography:

Janowski, Bernd, and Peter Stuhlmacher, eds. *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*. Translated by Daniel P. Bailey. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

Parenthetical Reference:

(Janowski and Stuhlmacher 2004, 201)

Reference List:

Janowski, Bernd, and Peter Stuhlmacher, eds. 2004. *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*. Translated by Daniel P. Bailey. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Books in a Series

Footnote:

¹John N. Oswalt, *Isaiah*, The NIV Application Commentary, ed. Terry Muck, et al⁴ (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 534.

Bibliography:

Oswalt, John N. *Isaiah*. The NIV Application Commentary. Edited by Terry Muck, et al. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

Parenthetical Reference:

(Oswalt 2003, 534)

Reference List:

Oswalt, John N. 2003. *Isaiah*. The NIV Application Commentary. Edited by Terry Muck, et al. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

⁴The student should use et al sources with more than three authors or editors.

Single Chapter or Section in a
(Usually Edited) Book

Footnote:

¹Rex A. Mason, "Gripped by the Certainty of God, Isaiah 6," in *Interpreting Isaiah for Preaching and Teaching*, ed. Cecil P. Staton, Jr. (Greenville, SC: Smyth & Helwys, 1991), 63.

Bibliography:

Mason, Rex A. "Gripped by the Certainty of God, Isaiah 6." In *Interpreting Isaiah for Preaching and Teaching*, edited by Cecil P. Staton, Jr., 61-66. Greenville, SC: Smyth & Helwys, 1991.

Parenthetical Reference:

(Mason 1991, 63)

Reference List:

Mason, Rex A. 1991. Gripped by the Certainty of God, Isaiah 6, in *Interpreting Isaiah for Preaching and Teaching*, ed. Cecil P. Staton, Jr. Greenville, SC: Smyth & Helwys.

Multi-volume Commentary, Multiple Biblical Books
in Single Volume

Footnote:

¹Christopher R. Seitz, "The Book of Isaiah," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander Keck, et al, vol. VI (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 345.

Bibliography:

Seitz, Christopher R. "The Book of Isaiah." In *The New Interpreter's Bible*. Edited by Leander Keck, et al. Vol. VI, 307-552. Nashville: Abingdon, 2001.

Parenthetical Reference:

(Seitz 2001, 345)

Reference List:

Seitz, Christopher R. 2001. The Book of Isaiah. In *The New Interpreter's Bible*. Edited by Leander Keck, et al. Vol. VI, 307-552. Nashville: Abingdon.

Multivolume Commentary,
Single volume by one author

Footnote:

Brevard Childs, *Isaiah, The Old Testament Library* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 293. [If the multivolume work has a volume number, the student would insert it prior to the series title, e.g. “vol. 6 in *The Old*”]

Bibliography:

Childs, Brevard. *Isaiah. The Old Testament Library*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001. [With volume number, the form would be “Vol. 6 in *The Old*”]

Parenthetical Reference:

(Childs 2001, 293)

Reference List:

Childs, Brevard. 2001. *Isaiah. The Old Testament Library*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.

Article, Bible Dictionary

Footnote:

¹Gerald G. O'Collins, “Salvation,” *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 910.

Bibliography:

O'Collins, Gerald G. "Salvation." *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5. Edited by David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Parenthetical Reference:

(O'Collins 1992, 910)

Reference List:

O'Collins, Gerald G. 1992. “Salvation.” *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5. Edited by David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday.

Journal Article

Footnote:

¹Robert North, "Theology of the Chronicler," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82, no. 4 (December 1963): 376. [Some journals have both volume and number, some do not.]

Bibliography:

North, Robert. "Theology of the Chronicler." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82, no. 4 (December 1963): 369-384.

Parenthetical Reference:

(North 1963, 376)

Reference List:

North, Robert. 1963. Theology of the Chronicler. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82, no. 4 (December): 369-384.

Students will find many other citation forms in Turabian, but these will suffice to show the basic information needed and the format for providing it, as well as differences in styles of documentation. The student should consult Turabian, the Chicago Manual of Style, and the APA manual for further forms, or for the answers to questions not provided in this chapter.

Because some HGST faculty members require footnotes, and because formatting footnotes requires careful attention, some basic instructions will help the student in the documentation process. First, the student must indent the footnote number from the left margin. After inserting the footnote number,⁵ the student must move the cursor to the left margin and hit the "tab" key, then returning to the right of the number to type the content of the footnote. Second, if using Microsoft Word, students should remove the space between the footnote number and the content of the note. Third, the student should place the footnote directly below the text of the page, not strictly at the bottom of the page. In

⁵Word processors will automatically insert footnotes. In Microsoft Word, the student will use the "Insert" menu, or shortcut Ctrl-Alt-F to insert a footnote.

other words, if the text does not fill the page completely, then the footnote is placed directly beneath the text, with only a double space between the text and footnote.⁶ In Microsoft Word, the student chooses the “Beneath text,” rather than “Bottom of page,” in the footnote options dialog box. Fourth, the student should add a blank line (i.e. hard return) after the footnote to leave a blank line between footnotes.

While the primary purpose of footnotes is to document sources, students should also use footnotes to include data that the student consider important, but not relevant enough to be placed in the text of the document. The type of information placed in content notes might include expansions beyond the scope of the document, alternative interpretations or conclusions, and additional information about people, place, or studies that is not relevant to the current study but might interest some readers. The student should use this manual, and the necessary style guides for further format questions regarding footnotes.

Presentation of the Document

Students typically give attention to the body of the text, but they give little thought the presentation of the paper as a whole. Beginning with the title page, writers must take care with presentation. The student will find the proper format for the title page in appendix 1. The title page is centered vertically on the page. The appearance of the page is important, since it is the first thing that a reader, usually an instructor, sees. The writer should insure that the items on the title page are evenly spaced. Unless otherwise directed by an instructor, every written assignment should include a title page.

⁶Turabian, 14.34-35.

A table of contents is helpful in long papers, and required for a thesis. A shorter paper does not need a contents page. If students have questions about the inclusion of a table of contents, they should ask the instructor. The formatting of the contents page is complicated. Students will find two examples of properly formatted tables of contents in appendix 3. Further instructions for typing a contents page is found in chapter 5 below, including methods for achieving correct spacing.

Any research assignment should include a bibliography or reference list. Instructions for the forms used on these sections of a document are given above. The bibliography is the final page, or pages, of a document. If the bibliography is long, the student may desire to divide it into sections for ease of use, such as “Original Sources,” “Linguistic Aids,” “Historical Documents,” or similar headings. Students may wish, at times, to include other parts in a written project, such as a preface or appendixes. The writer will find instructions for these in chapter five below.

Formatting the Text

Book Titles and Other Titles

Related to the issue of documentation is the presentation of titles in written documents. The student should italicize the titles of whole published works, such as books or journal titles. The writer should place titles of parts of these works, whether journal articles, essays in a book, or parts of a book, in double quotation marks. Titles of unpublished material, such as theses, dissertations, or reports, are also put in quotation marks. Titles of series and manuscript collections, and various kinds of descriptive titles, are neither italicized nor put in quotation marks.

Headings and Sub-headings

Writers often fail to pay close attention to the use of sub-headings. First, students tend to use too many sub-headings. Sub-headings should serve an organizational and directional purpose. Otherwise, the student should omit them. Chapter headings and other major headings should break into two or more single-spaced lines when longer than 48 characters. Arrange multiple lines in the shape of an inverted pyramid. Only long papers and theses need chapters. If the student uses chapters, they should serve a definite divisional purpose. Otherwise, sub-headings will suffice.

Students should carefully arrange sub-heading in parallel fashion. The sub-headings throughout the paper or thesis must descend according to the same pattern. Turabian offers the following plan for five levels, which is more than most papers will need, centered bold, centered, left margin bold headline style, left margin sentence style, and run-in heading sentence style.⁷

Traditional Controversy between Medieval Church and State

Reappearance of Religious Legalism

Legalism and the Poets (may also be italicized)

The gospel as it is related to Jesus

The gospel legalized in the church.

In order for the reader to follow the thoughts and arguments of a document, the student must carefully maintain parallelism in the use of sub-headings.

⁷Turabian, 398.

Margins and Spacing

Turabian states that all margins must be at least one inch on all four sides of a document. If the document will be bound, such as a thesis, the left margin should increase to 1.5 inches. A two-inch top margin is required on all pages with major headings, such as chapter headings and bibliography, with the exception of the contents page, which remains at one inch.

Spacing is important for any written document, both for aesthetic reasons and in order for the reader to follow the flow of the paper. Sometimes students are confused by the terminology of single-spaced, double-spaced, and triple-spaced. The single-spaced paragraph contains no blank lines. Double-spacing has one blank line between lines of text, and triple-spacing has two blank lines between lines of text. The student should use double-spacing throughout the document, except in the following instances.

Several places in a document require single-spacing. Blocked quotations are single-spaced, although double-spacing precedes and follows the blocked quotation. In the bibliography and reference list, students should single-space within entries, and double-space between entries. If a heading or sub-heading is more than 48 spaces, the student should divide it into two or more lines, with single-spacing between the first and the runover line(s).

In two common cases, the student should use triple-spacing. Triple-spacing is required before sub-headings. If two sub-headings occur adjacent to one another, double-spacing separates the two sub-headings. If the student uses chapters, a triple-space follows the chapter title. Students may encounter other spacing issues, such as when using charts or tables. Turabian will address these matters.

Pagination

All documents should include page numbers. HGST requires that the student place the page number in the upper right hand corner of each page, except for the following exceptions. The title page receives no page number, although it is counted. According to Turabian, the student should number the front matter of theses and long papers (including title page, preface, acknowledgements, dedication, foreword, copyright page, signature page, and table of contents) with small Roman numerals, beginning with the title page as page i. All pages with major headings receive a page number in the center at the bottom of the page.

Since most students are using Microsoft Word, a few words concerning page numbers and Word may be helpful at this point. Word does not do pagination well because the writer cannot place page numbers in different locations from page to page, as WordPerfect allows the writer to do. The student can move page numbers to different places on different pages in at least two methods. First, the student can insert section breaks to change formatting from section to section. This allows the writer to insert the page numbers at different places on different sections. Second, the student can save each page that needs a page number in the bottom center position, allowing the writer to place the first page number at the bottom center, rather than top right, of the page. The student will need to insert page numbers into each document, leaving the number off the first page, beginning at the correct number, and then inserting the correct page number in the footer. The student will find pagination in Microsoft Word to be challenging. The student is responsible, nonetheless, to correctly paginate documents for submission to HGST.

Biblical References

Several instructions concerning biblical quotations will help the student. First, the student should choose one primary version of the Bible and use it consistently. For theses and longer papers, especially those with many biblical references, the student should state in the preface which version he or she is using. Such a statement will eliminate the need for footnoting the Bible. If the student quotes from a different version, the student must document the second version, using the version abbreviations. Second, when documenting references to biblical quotations, the student should use abbreviations for the names of the biblical books. The biblical book names should be spelled out only when referring to whole books or whole chapters of books. The Chicago Manual of Style and Hudson's *Christian Writer's Manual of Style* contain lists of abbreviations for biblical books, as well as correct abbreviations for Bible versions.⁸ A few examples of correct biblical citations follow. The examples include two abbreviation systems, one with periods and one without. The writer should use only one abbreviation system in a document. Consistency is the key. The student also should note the proper spacing. No spaces are used between numbers and colon or numbers and hyphen. The examples include a series of biblical references.

1 Kings or Kgs 3:10 (Only spell out the number at the beginning of a sentence.)

Gen. or Gn 1:1-2:3 NRSV

Matt. or Mt 28:20 NIV

1 Cor. or 1 Cor 9:24-27 AV (for Authorized [King James] Version, not KJV)

Jeremiah 29

Matt. 3:4; John 3:16, 19; Rom. 10:9

Since seminary papers typically include biblical references, the student should pay special attention to the proper citation of scripture, especially with reference to abbreviation, spacing, punctuation, and the use of numbers.

Numbers, Dates

Other issues with numbers also arise in academic writing. First, questions arise concerning spelling out numerals. A sentence should never begin with a numeral; rather, the number should be spelled out. As a rule, in the text of a document, students should spell out numbers up to one hundred, as well as even hundreds, thousands, and millions. The writer may use numerals for numbers above one hundred. For example, correct forms would be: three, forty-seven, one hundred, 115, four thousand, and 2,419.

Second, dates are a common confusion. Turabian offers two forms for writing dates. The preferred form is 17 August 2006, but a second acceptable form is August 17, 2006, after which the writer must always place a comma following the year. As with other form and style factors, consistency is paramount. For further rules concerning numbers, including fractions, decimals, percentages, currency, and plurals of number, the student should refer to chapter twenty-three in Turabian.

To Quote or Not to Quote

Students need to hear one final word concerning quotations. All quotations need to have direct relevance to their context. Many quotations are superfluous and could easily be omitted or summarized without diminishing the effectiveness of the document. This problem is particularly relevant to biblical quotations. Since most of the written projects at HGST have some theological or biblical content, students often to feel the

⁸*Chicago Manual of Style*, 14.34-35; Hudson, 19-24, 81-86.

need to include regular quotations from the Bible. Students also commonly retell biblical stories, recounting detailed events. In most circumstances, a brief summary and a discussion emphasizing the connection of the story to the student's project will suffice, with a biblical reference to guide the reader to the source. Students should omit all quotations that do not directly address the topic under discussion or fit into the flow of the document.

Conclusion

Students tend to fall into two categories concerning formatting matters on papers, either ignoring formatting rules or agonizing over them. HGST presents this manual to the student to alleviate both of these extremes. The student who tends to ignore formatting will see that proper formatting is an expectation, not a request. The anxious student will find many common questions answered in this manual, along with references to solutions for less common matters. This manual will now move to the topic of thesis preparation.

CHAPTER 5

THESIS PREPARATION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide MA students, advisors, thesis readers, and professors with general guidelines for the preparation, format, and submission of theses. These guidelines provide answers to the most frequently asked questions concerning the preparation of theses at Houston Graduate School of Theology. Although this guide minimizes the possibility for misunderstanding or uncertainty concerning final preparation and submission of the thesis, it is not designed to answer all possible questions. Earlier sections of this manual were designed to answer many style and format questions. The student should consult Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, seventh edition, on specific matters of style, documentation, and format not touched upon in this manual. For students doing theses in Master of Arts in Counseling degree program, the *Publications Manual* of the American Psychological Association will offer another usable format that may be more practical for additional graduate or professional activity. The next chapter will answer specific questions regarding the use of the APA guide for MA in Counseling theses. The present chapter will address issues related to proposing, writing, and submitting a thesis.

Thesis Proposal

The MA student should spend his or her program preparing toward the completion of a thesis. This process includes determination of an adequate research topic, the approval of a thesis proposal, and the satisfactory completion of the project. The student should register for the course RE 500 Research Methods early in his or her program. The course must be completed before the final year of the student's program so that the thesis can be completed during the final year.

No later than the fourth week of the fall semester of the year of anticipated graduation, the student must submit a thesis proposal. Appendix 4 contains a sample of the Thesis Proposal form. Submission of this form communicates to the faculty that the student has begun the research process, determined a topic to research, and developed a research plan. A preliminary bibliography of at least ten sources should accompany the thesis proposal. The faculty may ask the student for further research or clarification before approving the thesis project. The student should then spend the fall semester researching and writing the thesis in order to meet the submission deadlines of the spring semester.

Nature and Purpose of Thesis

The master's thesis is not simply one more task to complete at a minimal level in order to get a degree. The thesis should be a learning experience for the writer that exhibits an ability to analyze existing literature in a chosen specialty and create personal concepts and conclusions, using in depth proof and support. While the thesis usually involves an examination of pre-existing work in a given field, it is not simply a regurgitation of the ideas of other scholars. The thesis should be focused around the

author's own ideas; the ideas of other scholars should be used for illumination, support and development of the work of the thesis writer.

At every stage of the choice of subject and the writing of the thesis, the writer should feel free to consult the thesis advisor for advice in bibliography and research methods, as well as for advice on the choice of and feasibility of a given subject. The student also can find valuable guidance on treatment of subject matter and organization of research in *The Modern Researcher* by Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff and *The Craft of Research* by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams.¹

Whatever the topic of the thesis, the writer's ideas need research verification. This verification will come primarily through scholarly research. If the writer of the thesis wishes to use a survey, care must be taken regarding instruments, data, and interpretation of data. The student must analyze carefully all data collected, taking care to avoid quick conclusions and to recognize possible privacy issues. Anecdotal evidence is difficult to synthesize with scholarly research, so the author should supplement anecdotal and personal ideas with more objective forms of verification, such as surveys, statistics and concepts drawn from preexisting scholarship. Students tend to approach the thesis as an assignment to be completed, rather a topic to be researched and analyzed. The student must analyze the topic from a variety of perspectives and to an extent that draws conclusions based on the breadth required in the field of study. The advisor will compel the student to accomplish adequate research in order to meet expected quality standards.

¹A revised form of *The Craft of Research* is included in Turabian, 7th ed.

Quality Standards

Since one copy of each degree thesis at HGST is kept on permanent display in the library as evidence of the intellectual quality of research at HGST and of the students' abilities, research and writing both need to be at the highest level of style, clarity and depth. Furthermore, consistency of formatting assures the continued quality of HGST theses. This manual contains many of these standards, including research, style, and presentation. The student can find answers to other questions in Turabian or other sources found in the bibliography, as well as from their advisors.

Grammatical and stylistic correctness are a given. The student can find specific information on use of pronouns, format and documentation elsewhere in this work and in Turabian. Spelling should follow standard American spelling as preserved in any standard dictionary. Grammar and stylistic information is obtainable in many works, especially *Elements of Style*, by Strunk and White or Fowler's *American English Usage*. Word processors will aid the student's desire to achieve grammatical correctness. The student should activate the spelling and grammar checking functions of the word processor and set the grammar to check for formal English grammar. Clarity and correctness can be preserved by consultation with the student's advisor at all stages in the preparation of both the initial rough draft and final draft. Quality is a standard, not a desire, so students must adhere to the standards of this manual.

Content

Under normal conditions, the thesis should be a minimum of 60 pages in length, divided into chapters with an introduction and conclusion. The student should strive for

smooth transitions between major sections of the thesis, making the project easier and more enjoyable to read.

The first chapter of the thesis is the introduction to the study. The introduction should present the topic to be addressed in the thesis, and perhaps the reasons that the author chose the topic for research. The introduction should also present the need for the study and perhaps delimitations, if the student is intentionally omitting some matters related to the topic. If delimitations are offered, the student should also present reasons for omitting these matters of possible research.

The chapters of the thesis have particular purposes. The second chapter, which is essentially the first chapter of the thesis, serves two functions. First, the student should conduct a thorough review of literature or history of research on the topic, providing the reader with the breadth and scope of the subject. Second, the chapter should present the manner of presentation chosen by the student. At the end of this chapter, the reader should have some understanding of the topic and know how the student plans to conduct research and reach conclusions. The next chapter, or chapters, will present the student's proposals or arguments and research to ascertain the viability of those proposals. The final chapter of the thesis should do more than summarize the writer's ideas. In this chapter, the student presents conclusions based upon the research of the previous chapters. The final full chapter, immediately preceding the conclusion, should relate integrally to the second chapter, connecting the initial history of research to the conclusions reached in the intervening chapters.

The conclusion is the final chapter of the thesis. The conclusion should briefly summarize the research, reiterating the conclusions reached. The author of the thesis also

should present in the conclusion the importance of the conclusions reached in the thesis. The student may desire to offer areas of investigation for additional work on the topic.

Style and Format

This manual addressed general matters of style and format in previous chapters. In this section, however, matters of formatting specific to theses will be presented.

Order of Presentation

The student should present the components of a thesis in the following order.

- Title page
- Blank page
- Approval page
- Preface (optional)
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Table of Contents
- List of tables or illustrations, if any (optional)
- Body of Text
- Appendixes (optional)
- Bibliography or Reference List

Only the sections marked optional are optional. The thesis must include all other components. Some theses might have other components not listed here, such as Dedication, List of Abbreviations, or Glossary. For these components, the student should consult the first chapter of Turabian.

Title page

The date on the title page indicates the month and year the degree is conferred, regardless of when the work was completed. The place on the title page is Houston, Texas. This page is counted as page one, but the number does not appear on the page. Appendix A contains a sample title page.

Approval page

The approval page is counted as page three, but the number does not appear on the page. All the readers must sign the approval page in black ink. The date will be the date of the signatures involved. Appendix 2 is a sample Approval Page.

Acknowledgements (optional)

Some students may wish to express formal appreciation for some extraordinary assistance or support that made the completion of the study possible. The student need not include a statement acknowledging the routine assistance any student receives from a major professor and readers. Every student received support and assistance from a number of sources. Only the most significant should be included on the Acknowledgment page.

Table of contents

The table of contents is composed of a list that includes at least the following elements with their page numbers: chapter numbers and titles, works cited, reference list, or bibliography and appendix titles. The format of the table of contents is complicated. Chapter numbers are placed flush right beneath the generic heading of Chapter. Chapter titles are then placed flush left. The page numbers are placed flush right, with dot leaders connecting them with the chapter titles. Appendixes follow the same format as Chapter Titles. If the student includes a preface, acknowledgments or list of tables, these precede the chapter titles. Appendix 3 of this manual contains samples of correct table of contents formats.

Body of text

HGST does not prescribe the exact order of presentation of the text itself, but as a book-length document, the paper should be divided into three or more chapters with appropriate titles. A preface is optional, as are subheadings within chapters.

If subheadings are used, they should conform to chapter IV of this manual.² Thesis writers are cautioned that too extensive use of subheadings creates a choppy, confused, and disorganized impression. The student should use a minimum of subheadings in order to organize the flow of argument.

Bibliography or Reference List

The final element of the thesis is the bibliography or reference list. The bibliography or reference list follows all appendixes. If the student documents the sources used in the body of the thesis with footnotes, then a bibliography should be used to list sources used for the thesis. A bibliography contains works cited, as well as significant works used in research but not cited. The student should use the reference list form if parenthetical references are used to document sources in the thesis. The reference list can also be called works cited, and contains only works cited in the thesis.

Charts, graphs, and questionnaires

All charts, graphs, questionnaires, maps, tables, and other illustrations used in the thesis should comply with the margin rules of 1½ inches on the left, and one inch on the right, head, and foot of the page. Photocopying may be used if reduction in size is

²See above, p. 34.

necessary to comply with margins, but the copy must be clean and clear. The tables and figures should be labeled and numbered in accordance with the style manual.

Preparation and Reproduction

Margins

Every page of the thesis must conform to the following margins.

Top: 1 inch (2 inches for the first page of every major division.)

Bottom: 1 inch

Left Side: 1-1/2 inches

Right Side: 1 inch

The only pages that do not conform to the one-inch top margin are the approval page, preface, acknowledgements, lists of tables or illustrations, bibliography or reference list, and pages with chapter or appendix titles. These pages begin two inches from the top of the page. The student should note that the only section of the front or back matter that has a one-inch margin is the table of contents.

Pagination

Introductory pages (Front Matter in Turabian), such as the table of contents, are numbered with lower-case Roman numerals at the bottom and center of each page, three-quarters of an inch from the bottom edge. The title page, blank page, and Approval Page are counted as the first three pages, although numbers do not appear on them. The first page showing a number will be page iv. Numbering with Arabic numerals begins with Chapter 1, the first page of which is page 1. These numbers are placed in the upper right

corner of each page, except for pages with major headings that are numbered at the bottom center of the page. The page numbers should be evenly spaced from the margin, approximately three-quarters of an inch from the top and one inch from the right edge, except on the first page of each chapter, appendix, etc., which is numbered at the bottom center, and is separated from the text by at least one double space. The *HGST Writer's Manual* is properly paginated.

Paper

All final copies of the thesis must be clear, clean copies made on 20 lb., minimum 25 percent minimum cotton fiber bond paper, size 8-1/2 by 11 inches. The student can purchase the cotton paper and print the thesis on a laser printer or have it duplicated professionally.

Type Size and Font

The student should type the entire thesis in 12 point Times New Roman. Script type and other irregular fonts are unacceptable. The writer should not use boldface except for first level sub-headings, if desired. Italics should only be used only for book and journal titles, foreign terms, emphasis in a quote, or sub-headings. The student should use all capitals only in chapters and other major page headings.

Typists

HGST has no authorized typists. The student chooses the typist and makes all business arrangements concerning the production of the thesis. The student should provide the typist with a legible and properly punctuated manuscript to reduce later complications. The student bears the final responsibility for the form, accuracy, and

completeness of the paper, not the typist. A typist is not an editor. The student must proofread the paper and correct any errors before submitting the thesis to the Dean of the Faculty.

Final Production and Submission Procedures

The student should register for the appropriate thesis course (numbered 795, e.g. COU 795) during the fall semester of the year of anticipated graduation, with the thesis advisor listed as faculty. The course number will differ depending upon the degree program or concentration, so the student should consult the HGST catalog for the proper course number. The student should take the thesis course during the writing of the project. Because of submission deadlines, the student cannot wait until the semester of graduation to begin work on a thesis. Therefore, registering for this course in the fall will allow time for the student to complete all requirements.

The student is responsible to meet all deadlines for proposal, editing, and final submission of his or her thesis. The student should consult the current Academic Calendar and other announced deadlines. First drafts of theses are due at or near the beginning of the spring semester of projected graduation. Failure to meet deadlines will result in delay in graduation to the following year. The student should resolve any questions with the thesis advisor and, if necessary, with the office of the Dean of the Faculty.

The HGST Academic Calendar includes two dates for submission of the thesis, senior thesis due (complete/approved draft) and senior thesis due (final corrected copy). The complete and approved draft approval date is near the beginning of the spring

semester. Once the advisor has approved the thesis in its complete form, the student should submit two copies of the complete approved draft to the office of the Dean of the Faculty for the readers. The readers will return the copies to the office of the Dean of the Faculty within two weeks, allowing several weeks for further revisions and corrections. During this interim period, the student must address and resolve all matters relating to the thesis. The final corrected copy is due approximately one month before the prospective graduation date, according to the HGST academic calendar. This copy must be presented on cotton paper, ready for signatures and binding. Any delay with final submission may require postponement of the student's graduation to the next academic year.

The student's readers and the Dean of the Faculty, or a representative, will review theses for correctness of form, accuracy of typing, the use of correct paper and typeface, and other matters of format or style. These persons will answer questions concerning matters of form, policy and procedures for submission of theses, but the responsibility of ensuring that the thesis maintains the highest standards of research, style, content, and format lies with the student, under the leadership of the thesis advisor. The student must make required corrections on all copies. After approval, the readers and Dean of the Faculty will sign the thesis. The student must submit two copies, each on the paper and in the style specified below.

Copies

The student is responsible to complete typing and duplication before the deadline. HGST will only accept high quality clean copies; therefore, the student must exercise care in the selection of commercial duplicating services. The student should refuse to accept work that does not meet the standards spelled out in this guide.

Binding

The copies of the thesis will be processed for binding by the seminary. The cost of binding theses is included in the graduation fee. The seminary retains one copy, and one is provided to the student. The student will bear the expense and the responsibility for any additional copies. On or before the announced deadline, the student must deliver all copies of the thesis to the office of the Dean of the Faculty, who will send them for binding after the spring semester. HGST will notify the student when the bound copies have returned from the bindery. The student should supply contact information or arrange for mailing address and postage for personal bound copies.

Conclusion

The guidelines in this manual are intended to answer some of the general questions concerning format, style, and submission of a thesis. More specific questions are answered in the required style manual and through consultation with the thesis advisor and readers. In the final analysis, however, the student has responsibility to meet all requirements. Accordingly, the student must ensure that the paper is properly formatted and typed, that it is reproduced in an acceptable manner, and that all deadlines are met.

CHAPTER 6

FOR COUNSELING STUDENTS ONLY

Master of Arts in Counseling students face the task of deciphering the APA and Turabian manuals for their written work at HGST. The APA format is the norm for the psychology field, thus in the program the APA manual is used as the normal style. However, the writers of the APA manual admit that the manual is designed for submission of journal articles, not for term papers or theses. Thus, the manual includes an entire chapter¹ on the differences between submitting journal articles according to APA format and papers or theses to graduate schools. The differences stem from a fundamental dissimilarity in purpose. A writer submits a journal article to a copy editor, who will edit the document for final publication. A student presents a paper or thesis as “final copy.” The APA manual authors remind the student that graduate schools will produce guidelines to explain the divergences from strict APA format, and that the student must follow school guidelines. Chapter 6 of this manual serves that purpose for HGST students.

Divergences from APA

These divergences from the APA manual are designed to standardize HGST theses into a single format. When a reader picks up a thesis in the HGST library, the basic appearance of the document should not change between MA and MA in Counseling theses. In this section, the divergences from APA will be highlighted.

First, so that every thesis will have the same overall appearance, all HGST thesis title pages will conform to the form presented above in chapters 4 and 5 and in Appendix 1. This change from APA format has other implications as well. The title page will not contain a running head, which also means that the remainder of the thesis will contain neither a running head nor page header. In addition, pagination will not appear on the title page, meaning that the APA pagination system will be overridden by the Turabian system.

Page numbering for counseling thesis will follow the same system outlined above in chapter 4 and 5. All front matter, which is everything before the Introduction of the paper, is numbered with small Roman numerals, placed at the bottom center of the page. The Introduction will then be page 1. All page numbers in the body of the text are placed at the upper right margin except for the front matter and pages with major headings, such as chapter title and the first page of the Reference list.

Another change from APA formatting is the use of single-spacing at several points. Because the APA manual is designed for copy editing, double-spacing is used throughout the document. All HGST theses will follow the spacing rules of Turabian. The student should use single-spacing in block quotes, within reference list entries, and in runover lines of sub-headings. However, normal spacing will remain before and after each of these items, triple space before sub-headings and after Chapter titles, and double-spacing in all other places.

Two other Turabian form requirements will apply to all HGST theses. First, the table of contents will follow the guidelines of chapter 4 and 5 of this manual. Students

¹APA, chapter 6, 321-330.

will number appendixes with Arabic numerals rather than with letters, as stated in the APA manual.

Other matters will follow APA guidelines. This includes the use of p. and pp. in parenthetical references of direct quotes. Titles in the reference list are sentence style, rather than the headline style of Turabian. Sentence style titles only use capitalization for the first word of the title and for proper nouns. In parenthetical references, the APA manual prescribes a comma between the author and year of publication, while Turabian does not. Finally, in the reference list, references are listed with dates immediately following the author, rather than at the end of the reference as in Turabian. Furthermore, multiple listings by the same author are arranged by date of publication, not alphabetically by title. Finally, although APA guidelines include abstracts, they are usually not necessary for masters' theses. HGST does not require, or expect, that students include abstracts in theses. These standards are sometimes confusing, but consistency is paramount. The student should learn the APA guidelines, as well as the variations in this chapter, in order to submit a high quality thesis.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Houston Graduate School of Theology offers a graduate education that requires many writing assignments. Graduate studies require a professional level of accomplishment and excellence. Because HGST faculty and students desire quality written assignments, this manual offers assistance and guidelines for research, style, format, and thesis submission. Students should use this manual as a guide for all written assignments, unless specifically altered in an instructor's course syllabus. The student must remember that the HGST Writer's Manual will not contain every instruction. It is designed to answer the most common student questions, and to resolve the most common problems observed by faculty members and past thesis readers. For matters not addressed in this manual, students should consult the appropriate style guide, either Turabian or the APA Manual. Using all of these resources, students will have the ability to produce the highest quality written assignments, which will assure a product that will invoke pride from the student and HGST.

APPENDIX 1
Sample Title Pages

TITLE GOES HERE IN ALL CAPS AND DESCENDING
PYRAMID FORM¹

A Term Paper

Submitted to [Your Instructor's Name]

[Your Instructor's Formal Title]

Houston Graduate School of Theology

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Course

Course # Course Title

Your Full Name

Undergraduate Degree, Your College or University, Year of Degree

Graduate Degree (if applicable), Your School, Year of Degree

Date of Submission

¹The page number on this page is for the manual. The actual Title Page will be counted as p. i, but the number will not appear on the page.

TITLE GOES HERE IN ALL CAPS AND DESCENDING
PYRAMID FORM

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of the

Houston Graduate School of Theology

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Degree Name

Your Full Name

Undergraduate Degree, Your College or University, Year of Degree

Graduate Degree (if applicable), Your School, Year of Degree

Date of Current Degree (May, 2007)

APPENDIX 2

Sample Tables of Contents

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APPENDIX	
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¹The first sample is a MA in Counseling thesis with appendixes, and the second is an MA thesis. The page numbering for these sample pages are for the manual. In an actual document, the Table of Contents will be numbered with small Roman numerals, at the bottom center of the first page and top right of subsequent pages.

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APPENDIX 3

Sample Thesis Approval Page

THESIS APPROVAL¹

A SURVEY OF NORTHWOODS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BY

JANE THOMSON MACCOLL

First Reader

Date

Second Reader

Date

Dean of the Faculty

Date

¹The page number on this page is for the manual. In the actual thesis, the approval page is numbered iii at the bottom center.

APPENDIX 4

Sample Thesis Proposal Form

Thesis Proposal¹

Student Name _____

Thesis Course (Numbered 795) _____

Semester Registered _____

Thesis Advisor _____

Anticipated Graduation Date _____

Proposed Thesis Title _____

Synopsis of Proposed Thesis (less than 100 words):

Approvals: Thesis Advisor _____

Student _____

Dean of the Faculty _____

¹ This proposal is only a sample, showing the information needed before making a thesis proposal. The actual Thesis Proposal form is available from the Registrar.

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