

Licentiate in Sacred Theology

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2026-2027

Santa Clara
Jesuit School of Theology

Welcome to the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University!



JST-SCU is a premier Jesuit theology center and the graduate school of theology of Santa Clara University that forms women and men from across the world to lead and minister in the 21st-century global synodal Church. We bridge rigorous academic contextual theology with lived realities of faith and equip lay and religious students with synodal tools of spirituality, discernment, dialogue, and collaboration to make a difference in the world. In keeping with our strategic priorities, students and faculty from across the globe converge at JST-SCU to engage in its academically rigorous, socially engaged, contextually diverse, and spiritually vibrant community.

JSTSCU is also an ecclesiastical faculty accredited and approved by the Vatican Dicastery for Culture and Education to prepare Jesuits, lay men and women, religious women and men, and diocesan priests for vocation, ministry, service, and career in the Church, society, and academy. With a current student body from 40 countries, our global community benefits from the wisdom of one another's experiences in preparation for ministry leadership and service to the Church and the world.

Located in the heart of Silicon Valley, Santa Clara University's vision and mission are firmly rooted in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition to educate citizens and leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion and build a more humane, just, and sustainable world. Santa Clara (www.scu.edu) blends high-tech innovation with a social consciousness grounded in the Jesuit educational tradition and engaged with various communities to foster an entrepreneurial mindset in view of helping shape the next generation of leaders and global thinkers.

Besides institutional and academic strengths in systematic theology, biblical studies, sacraments and liturgy, moral theology, social ethics, inter-religious dialogue, and Christian spirituality, JST-SCU has recently enhanced expertise in the following areas of study:

- Ignatian spirituality, including classes, research, and practicums; four spiritual directors trained in Ignatian spirituality are available for Jesuit students.
- Biblical studies, with an emphasis on textual knowledge and contextual interpretation.
- Social ethics, with expertise in reconciliation, ecology, family systems, and post-colonial perspectives.
- Theology of synodality, with focus on the understanding, knowledge, and practice of synodality in the global Church.

JST-SCU's small size allows our world-renowned faculty to personally engage our students in the highest quality of academic excellence. The Jesuit Community at JST offers an intercultural experience of friendship in the Lord that provides a conducive environment for those in formation. We are deeply committed to preparing Jesuits and ministers for service in a global, synodal Church. A strong academic and ministerial formation is key to what the Society of Jesus can offer our Church and world in the second quarter of the 21st century.

For U.S. and international students, JST-SCU offers the Master of Divinity (MDiv); Master of Theological Studies (MTS); Master of Theology (ThM); and Ecclesiastical degrees at the Bachelor (STB), Licentiate (STL), and Doctoral (STD) levels in Sacred Theology.

- Our first cycle includes Jesuits and other students from all over the world, and the MDiv and STB are designed to prepare Jesuits for priestly ministry in a variety of contexts and lay students for dedicated church service. The Bay Area provides rich opportunities for ministerial and pastoral formation in various cultures and languages and socio economic conditions. This intercultural context counts as a distinct strength of our program
- The MTS offers students a foundation in theology and ministry, and the ThM allows students to explore a particular aspect of theology through classwork and a project or thesis.
- The STL allows Jesuits, diocesan priests and religious women and men to do serious academic research in a particular area of theology. Students work with a faculty member with expertise in their thesis topic, providing strong support across the spectrum of theological disciplines.
- Our STD program works with candidates moving directly from the licentiate as well as those who return to further studies to prepare for their assignments in universities and formation centers around the world. Here our Jesuit and lay faculty are at their best, offering strong mentoring and support—with an eye to finishing the degree on time!

For Jesuits and others who would like to come to JST-SCU for a period of academic engagement and spiritual renewal, we offer a Renewal Program for one or two semesters, led by an experienced spiritual guide. Renewal participants enhance the life of the whole community, contributing insight, wisdom, and depth in the courses they take, sharing the breadth and depth of their ministerial experience in formal and informal settings.

JST-SCU is marked by a strong diversity of its community of scholars, staff, and students. While classes require sufficient English proficiency, our professors speak French, Italian, German, Portuguese, Swahili, Vietnamese, and Spanish, among other languages, creating an environment conducive to global theological scholarship. To better serve the needs of our diverse student body, we offer tutoring and writing assistance and coaching for international students (including Jesuits) to help them develop the skills needed for academic writing and research.

We invite you to make your distinctive contribution to our academic and faith community, as together we enliven faith, promote reconciliation, labor for justice, and participate in God's mercy.

Welcome to JST-SCU!

Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, S.J.
Dean, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University

Table of Contents

I.	**Program Guidelines**	**3**
	Overview	
	Goals and Objectives	
	Prerequisites and Advanced Standing	
	Degree Requirements	
	CPE Policy for STL Students	
	Concurrent STL / ThM	
	Continuing Registration	
	Graduation	
II.	**STL Thesis and Comprehensive Exam / Extended Paper Guidelines**	**9**
	Capstone Assignment Process	
	Thesis Guidelines	
	Comprehensive Exam / Extended Research Paper Guidelines	
	Capstone Assignment Filing Deadlines	
III.	**Granting the STL to Candidates Possessing an Earned PhD**	**15**

STL Program Worksheet, STL Specific Forms, and Registration Related Forms are all available on the Office of the Registrar page under "Forms."

I. Program Guidelines

Overview

The Licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL) is a two-year Roman Catholic ecclesiastical degree program in advanced theological study granted by the Jesuit School of Theology (JST) by virtue of its status as a pontifical faculty. The STL is the second cycle in the program of ecclesiastical degrees (*Veritatis Gaudium*, part VII, articles 47-50), meant to further theological expertise for service in official capacities in religious communities and dioceses, and for teaching in higher education, diocesan schools and seminaries. In keeping with the intellectual tradition and apostolic priority of the Society of Jesus, the program cultivates a critical fidelity to the Roman Catholic tradition, in service of a faith that does justice. It enables students to understand the interplay between faith and culture, preparing them to address theological and pastoral issues that emerge in diverse cultural contexts. The STL has been designed according to the guidelines of *Veritatis Gaudium* and the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education.

Student progress through the STL program is guided by the student's academic advisor, who is usually also the thesis director, and the STL Program Director. Students are encouraged to meet regularly with their academic advisor to ensure the student is making satisfactory progress toward completing the program.

Goals and Objectives

Institutional Learning Goals

1. Students will gain a broad foundation in Christian theology, with a focus on the Roman Catholic tradition.
2. Students will demonstrate a critically-informed approach to faith that promotes social justice for the common good, especially for the benefit of those in greatest need.
3. Students will recognize the interplay between faith and culture in addressing issues that emerge in diverse cultural contexts.

STL Student Learning Goals and Objectives

Goal I: Students will acquire a depth of knowledge and practical skills within a particular area of concentration, and hone these in light of assuming leadership roles within the Church.

Objectives:

A. Students will be able to employ the hermeneutical principles and research methods germane to their selected area of concentration.
B. Students will gain an advanced level of mastery with respect to their selected area of concentration.
C. Students will possess the linguistic skills appropriate to their field of study.

D. Students will be able to relate their academic studies to the advancement of the Church's mission in the world.

Goal II: Students will develop a critical fidelity to the Roman Catholic tradition, in service of a faith that does justice.

Objectives:

A. Students will employ historically and philosophically informed knowledge of the tradition in assessing theological positions.
B. Students will integrate the perspective of the poor and the marginalized in their reflection on theological and pastoral issues.

Goal III: Students will recognize the interplay between faith and culture in addressing theological and pastoral issues that emerge in diverse cultural contexts.

Objectives:

A. Students will incorporate skillful socio-cultural analysis into their reflection on theological and pastoral issues.
B. Students will locate theological and pastoral issues in the cultural contexts in which they emerge.

Prerequisites and Advanced Standing

Prerequisites for STL Program

- 24 semester units of philosophy at the Bachelor's level (strongly recommended prior to beginning the program).
- An earned Master of Divinity (MDiv) or Bachelor of Sacred Theology (STB).
- Proficiency in ecclesiastical Latin (strongly recommended prior to beginning the program).

Advanced Standing

Students who have taken graduate courses in theology not more than six years prior to registration may petition to transfer coursework for advanced standing in the STL program. Such petitions may be included with the Application for Admission or may be submitted during the first semester of study at JST. No more than nine semester units of transfer credit can be applied to the STL program at JST. These units must be from courses which cohere with the courses taken at JST as a concentration.

No units will be transferred that have already been counted toward another degree. No units will be considered for transfer that are not from regionally accredited institutions of higher learning or were not attained at a graduate level (at least 4000- level). Students formerly in the JST MDiv or STB programs may petition to transfer courses completed during the program provided that the courses were completed in the final year of the program, were taken at an advanced level (at least 4000- level) with a grade of B- or better, and were not counted toward

the MDiv or STB degree. See the Registrar page for the form to Transfer Coursework for Transfer of Credit and Advanced Standing.

Degree Requirements

To earn the STL degree, students must complete all of the requirements listed below:

1. Enroll at JST for four semesters as a full-time student.

2. Complete all degree requirements within four calendar years from the date of initial registration in the program. Two year's residence is required in the STL program, even though students may complete all degree requirements in less time.

3. Earn at least 35 semester units, including 24 units of academic coursework; nine units of STL-5500 Thesis, or three units of STL-5501 Extended Research Paper and six units of STL-5600 Comprehensives; and two units of FE-4400 Research Practicum (0.5 units for at least four semesters).

4. Specialize in one of the following concentration areas:
    - Biblical Studies
    - Systematic Theology and Church History
    - Moral Theology and Ethics
    - Pastoral and Liturgical Theology
    - Christian Spirituality

5. Complete 24 semester units of academic coursework (eight three-unit courses) at the 4000- level or above in the concentration area identified.
    - At least three units must be a methodology course appropriate to the student's concentration.
    - At least three units must be RS-2092 Culture, Context and Lived Religion, upgraded to the 4000- level, or an equivalent course approved by the Associate Dean in order to meet program Goal III, Objective A.
    - Students may upgrade the course content and assignments of a 2000- or 3000-level course to meet the STL advanced course requirements. In general, a research paper of 15 pages or more is required. See the Registrar page for the Course Upgrade form.

6. Engage in pastoral work for the duration of their program and enroll in FE-4400 Research Practicum each semester. All students will participate in a ministry placement each semester. International students in F-1 status must complete a Curricular Practical Training Cooperative Agreement. FE-4400 provides a forum for theological reflection on this practical experience, as students deepen their understanding of how faith is inculturated in real-world contexts and how culture shapes one's approach to ministry

and theology. The course also supports and guides students through the research and writing process as they move towards completion of their capstone assignment.

7. Demonstrate foreign language proficiency through transcripted coursework, or by taking the language exams provided for MA and PhD students at GTU, provided by the University of California (Berkeley), or individually created by JST faculty, where necessary. Students must be proficient in the following languages:
    - Latin, with a working reading knowledge of the language sufficient to use ecclesiastical documents, if this was not completed prior to enrollment in the STL. See the Registrar page for the Latin Language Certification form.
    - One modern language other than the student's native language, as approved by the academic advisor and the STL Program Director. See the Registrar page for the Language Certification form. The modern language must be:
        - One that has sufficient primary / secondary sources related to theological / religious studies.
        - Relevant to the student's research area.
    - For specialization in Biblical studies, students must also demonstrate a suitable knowledge of one of the Biblical languages. See the Registrar page for the Language Certification form.
    - Students must complete all language requirements prior to submitting the capstone assignment proposal.

8. Students in all degree programs must maintain a 3.0 (B) Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) to graduate. A grade of B- or better is necessary in all courses used to satisfy a requirement for all JST degree programs. Except for the Research Practicum (FE-4400), students in the STL program are not permitted to take courses as Pass / No Pass. However, students may petition the Associate Dean for permission to take a course as Pass / No Pass on an individual basis. See Academic Policies and Procedures for additional information on grades.

9. Earn nine units for the capstone assignment by completing either a thesis, or comprehensive exams plus an extended research paper.
    - The proposal for the capstone assignment is due no later than the last day of class in the semester prior to expected graduation. See the Registrar page for the STL Thesis or Extended Research Paper Proposal form.
    - The completed STL thesis / extended research paper must be submitted to the registrar's office by the first Monday in May for spring graduation.

10. Students completing the STL thesis must:
    - Register for nine semester units of research work in STL-5500 Thesis.
    - Complete a thesis of at least 75 pages in length under the direction of a thesis committee.
    - Defend the thesis in a one-hour oral examination.

11. Students completing the STL comprehensive exam and extended research paper must:
    - Register for six units of STL-5600 Comprehensives and three units of STL-5501 Extended Research Paper.
    - Pass a written comprehensive examination with a one-hour oral defense in the following three areas: a general examination (closed-book exam), a topical examination (closed-book exam), and a specialization examination (extended research paper).
    - Complete an extended research paper of 25 to 30 pages, representing the development of a paper written in an advanced level course. It must present and defend a clear thesis as well as demonstrate the student's familiarity with the relevant methods and scholarly literature in the discipline.

CPE Policy for STL Students

STL students may undertake a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) unit at approved sites as an option toward their degrees. This option may be beneficial for students in the Pastoral concentration whose research or ministerial work intersects with clinical spiritual care, trauma-informed ministry, pastoral theology, or chaplaincy.

Students may fulfill the CPE unit requirement either through a Special Reading Course (SRC) or an upgraded course, with the SRC option preferred. Students in the Pastoral or Moral concentrations may count a CPE SRC as one of their eight three-unit required STL courses, pending approval by the STL Program Director and Associate Academic Dean. See the Registrar page for the Course Upgrade and Special Reading Course forms.

CPE taken for an SRC or upgraded course may be recorded on a student's degree transcript, determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Sr. Assistant Registrar.
STL unit determinations for CPE will be made case-by-case by the Associate Dean, STL Program Director, and an additional faculty member, as needed (for example, via an SRC Course Upgrade Form).

Concurrent STL / ThM

Students who complete an STL degree can also receive a ThM degree concurrently by submitting a request to the Associate Dean. Requests to receive the ThM concurrently may be made at the time of application or no later than the third semester of enrollment. Students seeking the concurrent degrees must also take ST-3999 STL/THM Seminar, a one-unit course, in the spring semester of their final year to explore theological 'publics' for the ThM (civil) and STL (ecclesiastical) degrees, respectively.

Continuing Registration

STL students are considered to be in continuing registration once they have completed their coursework and the required units for the capstone assignment. Continuing registration

students will be required to register for nine units of STL-5505 and pay the continuing registration fee in order to maintain their full-time student status.

Students must file their thesis or extended research paper by the filing deadline for their intended graduation semester in order to avoid having to pay tuition for an additional semester. See Academic Policies and Procedures for additional information on continuing registration.

Satisfactory Academic Progress While In Continuing Registration Status

In general, satisfactory academic progress for STL students is governed by Academic Policies and Procedures. The following policy pertains only to students who are in continuing registration status.

While a student is in continuing registration status for the STL program, the thesis director must certify by the last week of classes in each semester that the student is making satisfactory academic progress. This determination will be based on: (a) the depth of contact between the student and the director; (b) the student's adherence to a research plan, if applicable; and/or (c) the student's progress in drafting, editing and polishing the thesis.

If the student is not making satisfactory academic progress, they will be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation are not eligible for institutional aid from the school.

Students who are on academic probation will be permitted to enroll in one additional semester of continuing registration in order to make progress toward their degree. If any student does not make satisfactory progress during the semester on academic probation, the Associate Dean will consult with the student's director to determine whether to dismiss the student for academic reasons or to continue the student and on what terms. The student, the director, and the Registrar will be informed of the outcome of the determination.

Graduation

JST has two graduation dates each academic year:

- May – for students who finish during the fall semester or by the spring May deadline
- September / October – for students who finish in late May through the summer

Note regarding Commencement Ceremony: The only students permitted to "walk" in the commencement ceremony in May are those who have finished or will finish all requirements for their degree before or during the spring term.

II. STL Thesis and Comprehensive Exam / Extended Paper Guidelines

This section describes in greater detail the process and requirements for completing the Thesis or the Comprehensive Exam / Extended Research Paper for the STL program. Together the final requirements are referred to as the capstone assignment in this handbook. The major steps are the formation of the committee, the submission of the proposal for the capstone assignment, the completion and defense of the capstone assignment, and submission of the graded work.

Capstone Assignment Process

Forming the Committee: The STL capstone assignment will be directed by a committee of at least two people. The director must be a member of the JST full-time permanent faculty. The director should also serve as the academic advisor for most of the program, including the coursework.

With the advice of the director, the student will choose one other committee member, who has expertise in the proposal subject matter. The second reader will ordinarily also be a member of the JST faculty.

Where the content of the thesis requires deeper expertise, especially for pastoral or regional expertise, the director may appoint a third member to the committee, after consulting the STL Program Director.

Proposal: All students must submit a proposal for their capstone assignment for approval from the Associate Dean before beginning thesis work. The STL proposal should include the STL Thesis or Extended Research Paper Proposal form as a cover sheet with the proposal attached.

The proposal must be written in English, although the thesis may be redacted in other languages familiar to the director and committee.

The STL thesis / extended research paper proposal is due no later than the last day of class in the semester prior to expected graduation. If a student does not file a proposal by the stated deadline, the student may petition the Associate Dean for an exception to this filing date.

Registration during Capstone Assignment work: During thesis work, students must register for nine units of STL-5500 Thesis.

Or, during comprehensive exam and extended research paper work, students must register for six units of STL-5600 Comprehensives and for three units of STL-5501 Extended Research Paper.

Oral Defense, Grading, and Honors: All capstone assignments require a one-hour oral defense or examination to be administered by the committee. The student must complete the STL Grade Report form and provide a copy to each member of the committee prior to the oral defense. The student must also complete the STL Oral Defense Certification form and provide a copy to the director prior to the oral defense.

Upon the completion of the oral defense of the capstone assignment, all members of the committee will have input into evaluation and grading. Grade options are:

- Pass with No Revisions.
- Pass with Minor Revisions. If the capstone assignment has been approved with minor corrections, the thesis director must approve corrections before the student submits the capstone assignment to the Registrar's Office.
- Returned for Major Revisions. When the revised thesis is submitted, the major revisions must be approved by all readers. The thesis director is responsible to ensure that all readers approve. Grade forms should be submitted to the Registrar's Office only after the capstone assignment is deemed acceptable.
- Does Not Pass.

Each committee member must select the appropriate grade, sign the form, and return it directly to the Registrar's Office. Major revisions of the thesis must be approved by the whole committee. Minor revisions need to be approved by the director only.

The granting of honors (if any) will be considered after the thesis is satisfactorily defended as determined by the thesis committee. The decision to confer honors must be agreed unanimously by the whole committee, based on the quality and creativity of the written work and the quality of performance at the oral defense, and does not take into account the student's GPA.

The director must select the appropriate level of distinction, sign the form and return it directly to the Associate Dean's Office. In cases where there is disagreement over the level of distinction, the director will bring the committee members to a consensus. The outcome of this consensus cannot be subsequently changed.

Formatting and Length: The STL thesis / paper should be formatted in accordance with library specifications, using the most recent edition of *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, by Kate Turabian. For style, formatting, copies and other requirements for submission of the STL capstone assignment, please see the GTU Guidelines and forms related to submission of thesis to SCU and GTU libraries.

The minimum length of the thesis is 75 pages. The length of the extended research paper is 25 to 30 pages.

Filing and Deadline: STL capstone assignments must be defended, graded, corrected, signed, approved by the GTU Library, and submitted to the Registrar with all fees paid by the first Monday in May for spring graduation.

Thesis Guidelines

Students completing the STL thesis must:

- Register for nine semester units of research work in STL-5500 Thesis.
- Complete a thesis of at least 75 pages in length under the direction of a thesis committee.
- Defend the thesis in a one-hour oral examination.

The proposal must be written in English, although the thesis may be written in other languages familiar to the director and committee.

Thesis Proposal Guidelines

All students must submit a proposal for their capstone assignment for approval from the Associate Dean before beginning thesis work. The STL proposal should include the STL Thesis or Extended Research Paper Proposal form as a cover sheet with the proposal attached. The proposal is due no later than the last day of class in the semester prior to expected graduation.

The proposal serves as a written contract between the student, the director and the reader. Even after the two faculty members indicate their approval, changes in outline and focus are still possible with adequate consultation as the writing project unfolds.

The thesis proposal should be five to seven double-spaced pages (excluding the bibliography) with one-inch margins and 12 point readable type. Footnotes should appear at the bottom of the appropriate pages. The thesis proposal should include the following sections and accompanying headings in the following order:

1. **Title Page:** The title page should include the student's name, proposed title of the work, the names of the director and readers, and the date the proposal is being submitted. The names of the director and readers may only appear if they have read and given their approval to the proposal in its present form.

2. **Introduction:** Introduce the topic and why / how you became interested in it.

3. **Scope and Nature:** Situate the topic in the field of discourse in which it is located, give its context / background (internal boundaries); indicate the history of this topic in prior literature (i.e., to what conversation are you trying to make a contribution?). Indicate the limits of your work, namely, things that will not be covered that might be expected (external boundaries).

4. **Thesis Statement:** In one or two sentences, state what the work will attempt to demonstrate or accomplish; that is, if not accomplished, the project changes drastically. In other words, indicate the question (i.e., a gap, a problem, a puzzle to be solved) that your thesis will attempt to answer. Then state the claim you will defend, using your argument / thesis as an answer to the question.

5. **Methodology:** Explain the theoretical frameworks and specific methodological tools that will be used for research and / or analysis. This is not a question about how the text / research will be organized.

6. **Significance:** Discuss the significance of the work within the discipline, and possibly for other communities (i.e., religious, local, political, national, etc.) and / or possibly for the scholar. That is, why is this work important? What difference will it make and to whom?

7. **Chapter Outline:** Give a clear indication of what each chapter of the dissertation will include. The chapter outline must comply with the spacing requirements of the proposal (i.e., that it is double- and not single-spaced text).

8. **Short Bibliography:** In addition to the five to seven page proposal, the student must include a short bibliography (no more than four to six pages) consisting of the most significant works / materials that will be used in the research / work, preferably arranged by topical heading. Students should include references in languages other than English when appropriate.

Style Guidelines for Thesis

Turabian is the writing style for GTU theses and dissertations (i.e., the most recent edition of *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, by Kate Turabian). Approval of style is the responsibility of the candidate's director. For style, formatting, copies and other requirements for submission of the STL capstone assignment, please see the GTU Guidelines and forms related to submission of thesis to SCU and GTU libraries.

Spacing: Double spacing is required for the main body of the work except in those places where conventional usage calls for single spacing (e.g., footnotes, indented quotations, tables, etc.).

Font: The type size should be 12 point. Type used for charts, drawings, graphs, tables, footnotes, etc., may differ according to format and space requirements, but should be at least 10 point.

Margins: Margin requirements apply to all pages, whether text, illustration, charts, graphs, or other content. Be sure to check the margins not only on pages with text, but also pages with charts, graphs, or images.

Left: 1 1/2 inches (When a hard copy of the thesis/project is bound, the left-hand margin will fall into a gutter; for this reason the left margin is larger than the others.)

Top, right, and bottom: 1 inch

Page numbers: Page numbers must be at least 1/2 inch from the edge of the page.

Filing Guidelines for Thesis

The final, graded, corrected, and signed original of the thesis and one copy, also with original signatures, must be submitted to the JST Registrar's Office. All JST-SCU degree candidates who must submit a thesis for their program must submit two archival quality copies of their thesis (for the GTU library), and one additional copy (for SCU) in electronic PDF format to the JST Registrar's Office. For those students writing theses focusing on matters pertaining to African nations, the electronic PDF format copy will also be sent to the two Jesuit African theologates by the Registrar.

After all of the readers have approved the thesis and the GTU Reference Librarian has approved the thesis format and paper, then the original and one copy of the thesis (both with original signatures) must be submitted to the JST Registrar's Office. These will become the bound copies to be kept in the GTU Library. Do not bind the thesis yourself. A Thesis Binding Fee will be charged to the student's account in the semester of graduation.

Comprehensive Exam / Extended Research Paper Guidelines

Students completing the STL comprehensive exam and extended research paper must:

- Register for six units of STL-5600 Comprehensives and three units of STL-5501 Extended Research Paper.
- Pass a written comprehensive examination with a one-hour oral defense in the following three areas: a general examination (closed book exam), a topical examination (closed book exam), and a specialization examination (extended research paper).
- Complete an extended research paper of 25 to 30 pages, representing the development of a paper written in an advanced level course. It must present and defend a clear thesis as well as demonstrate the student's familiarity with the relevant methods and scholarly literature in the discipline.

Comprehensive Exam / Extended Research Paper Proposal Guidelines

A proposal for the comprehensive exam and extended research paper is developed in consultation with the director / advisor and the course instructor from which the paper is developed. The proposal must identify the area of concentration specifically, as well as the general examination focus, the topical examination focus, and the research paper topic.

Filing Guidelines for Extended Research Paper

The student is responsible for submitting one copy of the final, signed STL extended research paper to the JST Registrar's Office in electronic PDF format. The copy should be prepared in accordance with the GTU Guidelines regarding paper, pagination, and style requirements.

Capstone Assignment Filing Deadlines

- Spring graduates: The filing deadline is the first Monday in May.
- September / October graduates: The filing deadline is the final day of the fall add / drop period.
- Fall registrants completing before the spring semester: The filing deadline is the final day of the spring add / drop period. These students will receive their degree in May.

III. Granting the STL to Candidates Possessing an Earned PhD

Candidates / Applicants with an earned PhD or equivalent degree in theology or a related discipline may petition to be awarded the STL by meeting the degree requirements as follows:

1. Submission of the completed Petition for Award of STL form, including the following attachments:
    - Official PhD transcript
    - Statement of applicable coursework, including courses taught and thesis committee service
    - Candidate's article or paper

2. The STL Program Director and the Associate Dean will sign the Petition signaling their recommendation to the Dean to approve the conferral of the STL degree upon the candidate; the final decision to confer the degree rests with the Dean.

3. The STL will be conferred in either October or May, according to the timing of the process.

See also the STL Thesis Equivalence Confirmation form on the Registrar page

STL Program Worksheet, STL Specific Forms, and Registration Related Forms are all available on the Office of the Registrar page under "Forms."