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# **HANDBOOK FOR PARTICIPANTS**

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## **The Doctor of Philosophy Program in Biblical and Theological Studies**

Revised May, 2015

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# 1. OVERVIEW OF THE Ph.D./BTS PROGRAM

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## 1.1. HANDBOOK FOR PARTICIPANTS

The Handbook for Participants is designed to help orient students to the Ph.D./BTS program. The Handbook contains requirements, policies, and procedures that govern the Ph.D./BTS program. This edition of the Handbook reflects the latest actions of the Ph.D./BTS Program Committee as of the publication date and should be regarded as an official supplement to Wheaton's Ph.D./BTS program policies and procedures found in the current edition of the Wheaton College Catalog.

## 1.2. WHEATON COLLEGE CATALOG

Students admitted to Wheaton College are subject to the requirements of the catalog and coinciding handbook that is current at the time of their initial enrollment. The catalog is updated annually. Students may complete the graduation requirements for their program as outlined in the catalog and coinciding handbook at the time of initial enrollment or any subsequent catalog and coinciding handbook in effect while they are enrolled for credit as degree-seeking students.

## 1.3. PROGRAM PURPOSE AND ACCREDITATION

The Ph.D./BTS program is designed to train scholars who can serve the church worldwide as teachers, researchers, pastors, and leaders. The program aims at fostering faithfulness to the teaching of Scripture with a view toward strengthening and equipping the church in its mission. The program is thus a natural extension of the overall purpose of Wheaton College, as reflected in the institutional mission statement:

Wheaton College serves Jesus Christ and advances His Kingdom through excellence in liberal arts and graduate programs that educate the whole person to build the church and benefit society worldwide.

The Ph.D./BTS program has received accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

## 1.4. PROGRAM PROSPECTUS

The Ph.D./BTS program is a hybrid, borrowing some of the best elements from North American, British, and German doctoral models. Formal courses are minimal, with emphasis placed on guided research and independent study. With only six students admitted each year, the program facilitates close peer relationships as well as enabling professors to devote considerable time to mentoring students. Each student will be provided a full tuition scholarship for as long as they remain in the program. Students will pay no tuition fees for any Wheaton course recommended by the student's mentor and approved by the appropriate field coordinator as important for the student's program. This tuition scholarship, along with a research assistantship, enables students to devote themselves to advanced learning as fully involved community members. While located in the Middle West of the USA, the program exposes students to perspectives from other parts of the world through consideration of methods and results of non-western scholars and through interaction with visiting international scholars.

Students will focus on either Biblical Studies or Theological Studies (the two program “fields”). But the nature of Scripture and the theological task demands that theology be rooted in Scripture and that Scripture be interpreted theologically. The Wheaton Ph.D. program therefore requires that its students take a holistic approach to biblical and theological studies. Students will write dissertations that focus on one of the traditional areas of academic competence (Old Testament, New Testament, Systematic Theology, or Historical Theology; these disciplines are the student’s “concentration”). But the entire program requires integration between the fields of biblical studies and theology. In order to facilitate this integration, students in the Wheaton Ph.D. program will write dissertations that are distinctly theological in nature. The integrative element is not intended to detract from the level of expertise developed in the concentration, but to strengthen it. Students may therefore find the program more demanding than some others, but it offers the distinct advantage of a more rounded understanding.

The Wheaton Ph.D./BTS program is designed on a three-year, full-time model. Students are expected to remain in residence for at least three academic years. Completion of the program in three years assumes strong biblical and modern language skills at the time of matriculation, exceptional masters-level work, serious preparatory thinking about a dissertation topic, and a disciplined work ethic.

While an introductory course orients students to the nature of Ph.D. studies and to the particular environment of Wheaton College, at the heart of the residence course work are five Ph.D. seminars. At the recommendation of their mentor, students may be required to take regular graduate courses from the BTS curriculum and undergraduate courses related to their dissertation. In addition, as a means of fostering broader exposure to biblical and theological studies, students will take an advanced graduate course at a non-evangelical institution. Students will also be required to participate in the Ph.D./BTS colloquium program. In their second or third year, students will work with a faculty member in a directed pedagogical experience. To ensure breadth of competence in their fields, they will also be expected to read widely enough in their chosen concentration (Biblical Studies: New Testament/Old Testament; Theological Studies: Systematic Theology/Historical Theology) so as to have an adequate foundation for teaching a variety of subjects within their disciplines. But the focus of the Wheaton Ph.D./BTS program is on independent research for the dissertation, conducted under the guidance of the student’s mentor. The production of an excellent and publishable quality dissertation should be the student’s main goal in the program. Students are expected to engage in serious dissertation research from the time they matriculate.

The time students take to complete the program depends on their level of academic preparation, as noted above, as well as their aptitude, and the time they are able to devote to the program. It is hoped that many students will be able to complete the Ph.D./BTS program requirements in three years. Some, however, will take longer. Whatever the program length, students are strongly encouraged to remain as residential students at Wheaton until all requirements are completed.

## 1.5. THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

As a distinctly Christian program, the Wheaton Ph.D./BTS program puts great emphasis on the learning community. Students are encouraged to study together, to consult regularly with faculty (in both formal and informal contexts), to be fully involved in the colloquia program, and to take advantage of the many opportunities for interaction with theological students and faculty in the wider Chicago area. It is also important for those in the program to participate as much as possible in the Chicago Society for Biblical Research and the regional and annual meetings of the Evangelical Theological Society, the Institute for

Biblical Research, the American Academy of Religion, the Society of Biblical Literature, and other similar bodies. Many of the papers at the national and regional conferences of these organizations are read by doctoral students. Aside from the intrinsic importance of offering worthwhile material to a wider audience and the valuable experience to the participant, involvement in professional societies can be a significant career development opportunity. Students should also consider revising seminar papers for publication: professors will offer advice and encouragement and help point manuscripts in the direction of suitable publications.

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## 2. ADMISSIONS

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Wheaton College's purpose is to educate women and men who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ and to equip them for worldwide ministry. Therefore, it is our desire that students be believing men and women who are in sympathy with the College's statements of faith and purpose.

Admission to Wheaton College is open to qualified persons of all denominations and fellowships, of any race, color and national or ethnic origin, without regard to gender or handicap.

### 2.1. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the general requirements for admission to Wheaton College, requirements for admission to the Ph.D./BTS program are:

- An MA (in an area of biblical or theological studies) or MDiv degree, or the equivalent.

Students applying in the Biblical Studies (Old or New Testament) track should be able to demonstrate (normally in conjunction with transcribed course work):

- Competence in Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Greek
- Competence in the field of Old Testament studies
- Competence in the field of New Testament studies
- Familiarity with Systematic Theology
- Familiarity with Historical Theology

Students applying in the Systematic Theology track should be able to demonstrate (normally in conjunction with transcribed course work):

- Competence in Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Greek
- Competence in the field of Systematic Theology
- Competence in the field of Historical Theology
- Familiarity with Old Testament studies
- Familiarity with New Testament studies

- Normally, a minimum GPA in masters-level studies of 3.5.
- An acceptable score on the GRE.

- Evidence of potential for doctoral-level research in the form of a substantial research paper.
- Reading ability in theological German (expected by the time of matriculation, not necessarily at the time of admission).
- Strong recommendations from three of the applicant's teachers and his or her pastor.
- For international students and permanent residents of the US whose native language is not English, three tests are required to take either the TOEFL or IELTS test with the minimal scores indicated below:
  - TOEFL 600 (Paper & Pencil)
  - TOEFL 5.0 (Internet-Based)
  - IELTS 8.0

Exceptions to these test requirements are made in the following instances:

1. If the student is a citizen of Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or the British West Indies and is a native speaker of English the GRE (where accessible) will be required instead.
2. If the student has acceptable scores on the tests within the past two years, there is no need to retake the tests.

## 2.2. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Application materials can be secured from the Graduate Admissions Office. Completed applications are due by January 1. Personal interviews with selected applicants will be conducted in February, and applicants will be notified of their status by the first week in March. Those placed on the waiting list will be informed of the final decision by April 15. Successful applicants must notify Wheaton of their intention to enroll by sending a \$500 deposit before 5:00 P.M., April 15. The deposit will be refunded when the student begins the program.

## 2.3. SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

All Ph.D. students are granted a tuition waiver for the entire length of their study in the Wheaton Ph.D. program. In addition, each student is granted \$10,000-per-year fellowship, paid in bi-weekly installments within the fall and spring semesters. This fellowship is available for three years and, in some cases, four. In return for this fellowship, students will be expected to serve the institution for an average of 8–10 hours per week during the academic term. The service will include, but not be limited to, research and classroom assistance to specific professors, tutoring of undergraduate and graduate students, and clerical support of the program and the department.



## 2.4. FULL AND PART-TIME STATUS

A student is defined as “full-time” in the Ph.D./BTS program when enrolled in at least 10 hours of doctoral-level classes per semester or engaged in at least 30 hours a week on average of dissertation research and writing. Students are expected to maintain full-time status throughout the consecutive three years of their residence at Wheaton. While not encouraged, summer employment may be allowed, pending consultation with the student’s supervisor.

## 2.5. ADVANCED STANDING AND TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Advanced standing and transfer of credit will not normally be possible in the Wheaton Ph.D./BTS program. In exceptional circumstances, an applicant to the program may petition the Ph.D. Committee for credit transfer. In any case, advanced standing or transfer of credit will be granted only at the time of admission to the program.

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# 3. PROGRAMS OF STUDY

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## 3.1. BIBLICAL LANGUAGES

All Ph.D./BTS students (with certain exceptions in Historical Theology noted below) are expected to be proficient in Biblical Hebrew and Greek at the time of matriculation. The student’s mentor will assess proficiency and recommend any further work in the languages. Proficiency is generally deemed to be equivalent to the level required of students who have completed the Wheaton M.A. in Biblical Exegesis.

## 3.2. OTHER LANGUAGES

Competent research at the Ph.D. level requires that students have a minimal reading knowledge of two modern languages other than English. Proficiency in theological German is expected of all Ph.D./BTS students at the time of matriculation. A proficiency test will ordinarily be administered on the Friday before fall semester classes begin. Students will be asked to translate a passage of theological German with the help of a lexicon. The exam administrator will be responsible for grading the test and, in consultation with the student’s mentor, recommending any further German language work. Ordinarily, retakes will be taken on the Friday before spring semester classes begin.

The second required modern language is typically French, though at the recommendation of their mentors, students may opt for a different language. Students should indicate on their dissertation proposal the second language they plan to acquire with a brief rationale. The Ph.D. committee will then determine whether the request should be approved. Proficiency in a second foreign language should be demonstrated before entering the second year of the program. A proficiency test, identical in structure and procedure to the German test, will ordinarily be administered on the Friday before fall semester classes begin. Retakes will usually be taken on the Friday before spring semester classes begin.

Students who fail to pass a modern language exam may receive up to two re-takes. Unless the PhD committee grants an exception, the first German re-take must occur in January of the student’s first

year in the program, and any second German re-take must occur no later than September 1 of the student's second year. A student failing a modern language exam three times will normally be dismissed from the program, unless the PhD committee determines to place the student on probation and allow one final re-take based upon special circumstances.

Students cannot apply for candidacy status until they have satisfied the second research language requirement. Students who have not applied for candidacy by September 1 of their fourth year will automatically be placed on probation, and the PhD committee will then vote at its first available meeting about whether to allow them to continue in the program.

### 3.3. FIRST-YEAR EVALUATION

Toward the end of the student's first academic year, the student's fitness for Ph.D.-level study will be evaluated. Student progress is assessed by several criteria: quality of seminar work, timely completion of requirements, progress on the dissertation, writing aptitude, and promise of teaching/research ability. The student's mentor will be responsible for making a recommendation concerning continuation in the program to the Ph.D. Committee. Any recommendation that a student be placed on probation or not continue in the program will require the endorsement of the Ph.D. Committee before the action becomes official.

### 3.4. CANDIDACY

The Ph.D./BTS student is normally granted candidacy status (ABD) following the successful completion of all degree requirements, excepting the passing of the comprehensive exam, and the completion of the dissertation. The student will make a formal request for candidacy to the program administrator. The program administrator will carefully check that the student has completed all required course work and credit hours. The administrator would then present the student's request to the supervisor, who will draft a progress report regarding the likelihood of timely, effective completion of the dissertation. The supervisor will then make a recommendation concerning the student's candidacy status to the Ph.D. Committee. If the Committee grants the student candidacy, the administrator will notify the Registrar, who will record the student's status on their transcript. If candidacy could not be granted immediately, the committee could either delay it temporarily until satisfaction of some condition(s) or else, in severe circumstances, dismiss the student from the program.

Students who have not applied for candidacy by September 1 of their fourth year will automatically be placed on probation, and the PhD committee will then vote at its first available meeting about whether to allow them to continue in the program.

### 3.5. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Ph.D./BTS program consists of a mixture of structured course experiences and independent study—with an emphasis on the latter. A minimum of 40 and maximum of 60 hours is required. The total number of hours required of each student is determined when an offer of admission is made. The student's mentor, in consultation with the student, will provide a preliminary and revisable outline of the specific program structure at the time of matriculation. The following are the components of the program.

#### **Introduction to Doctoral Research—1 course, 1 credit**

Ph.D./BTS students will register for this course (BITH 751) in the first quad of their first semester, though it may be divided into two, with a portion being taken at the beginning of each of the first two semesters. The course provides a general orientation to doctoral studies at Wheaton and to the composition of dissertation prospectuses.

#### **Seminars—5 seminars, 2–4 credits each**

Doctoral seminars focus on a particular issue and demand significant student participation. They are offered on a 3+1 credit basis (4 credits are given for the equivalent of three hours of class work [e.g., approximately 2000 minutes of time in class]). These minutes may be spread equally throughout the semester (e.g., 27 sessions of 75 minutes each) or concentrated in fewer sessions.

All students will enroll in five seminars over their first two years. The first seminar is a common seminar, BITH 881, normally taken in the student's first semester. A second common seminar, BITH 884, is normally taken in the student's fourth semester. Beyond this, each student must also enroll in two seminars in their major field and one in their minor field (the two fields are Biblical Studies and Systematic/Historical Theology). Biblical Studies students will therefore take one section each of BITH 879 and BITH 881, two of BITH 882, and one of BITH 883; Systematic/Historical Theology students will take one section each of BITH 879 and BITH 881, two of BITH 883, and one of BITH 882.

#### **Directed Research—0 or more courses, 2–4 credits each**

Directed research courses in the BTS department. (BITH 793) combine independent study with participation in an existing formal Wheaton class. Students will be expected to attend the relevant class and do the required readings but will not normally be expected to write a paper or take tests – although, at the discretion of the student's mentor and the class instructor, these may be required. The mentor may assign additional reading or require a paper that blends the focus of the course with the student's dissertation interest. The mentor will be the professor of record for directed research classes, but the mentor must consult with the classroom instructor about requirements and in assessing student performance in the course.

Students may also take at least one directed research course in conjunction with a Wheaton College liberal arts class outside the BTS department (BITH 794). Students should register for BITH 793 or 794, but also indicating (in parentheses) the associated classroom course. The permission of the classroom teacher should be secured and indicated by the signature of the classroom teacher on the registration form. Which and how many directed research courses a student is required to take is at the discretion of the student's mentor.

### **Guided Research—1 or more courses, 1–4 credits each**

Guided research courses (BITH 795) provide credit for research toward the dissertation. They are normally taken with the student's mentor, who is responsible for setting requirements, monitoring progress, providing a final evaluation, and registering grades.

### **Off-Campus Course—1 course, 3–4 credits**

Each student is required to take at least one course for credit at an institution other than Wheaton Graduate School. Students are especially urged to take a course that will expose them to methods and approaches that are not typical of Wheaton. The student's mentor and the Program Administrator will help the student choose an appropriate course and must approve the course.

### **Pedagogical Experience—1 course, 2 credits**

Each student will be involved in a directed pedagogical experience (BITH 798), normally in the second or third year. The student will work with a professor (possibly but not necessarily his or her mentor) in teaching a specific Wheaton College class. The student will assist in syllabus construction, class set up, evaluation procedures, and classroom teaching. The student is responsible to identify a professor and/or specific class through which the pedagogical training will take place. The student's mentor can also assist in identifying an appropriate venue for the experience

### **Dissertation – zero credit**

BITH 898: Dissertation. This number is used for students to register once during their first three years in the program. This is used when students are full-time in the program.

BITH 899: Dissertation Continuation (Full-Time). This number is used by students in the program when they are working full-time on the dissertation. This number can be used as many times as necessary, up to their six years maximum in the program, provided they are working on the dissertation at least 30 hours per week and do not have paid employment for more than 24 hours per week. This registration status means that students are eligible to purchase health insurance, to receive student loans and to obtain loan deferment. Faculty mentors and the program administrator will verify the accuracy of their reported employment status and dissertation progress.

BITH 999: Dissertation Continuation (Part-Time). This number is used by students when they are working part-time on the dissertation. This number can be used as many times as necessary, up to their six years maximum in the program. This applies when students have paid employment of 24 or more hours per week and/or are working on the dissertation less than 30 hours per week. This registration status means that students are eligible to purchase health insurance but are not eligible for students loans or loan deferment. Faculty mentors and the program administrator would verify the accuracy of their reported employment status and dissertation progress.

### 3.6. OVERVIEW OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Program Component	Classes	Credits
<b>Seminars</b>	5	17
Common Seminars (BITH 881 and BITH 884)	2	5
Major Field Seminars for BT students: BITH 882 for ST/HT students: BITH 883	2	8
Minor Field Seminar for BT students: BITH 883 for ST/HT students: BITH 882	1	4
<b>Classes</b>	3 or more	8 or more
Intro. to Doctoral Research (BITH 751)	1	1
Course at an institution other than Wheaton	1	3–4
Directed Research Course in conjunction with a Wheaton Liberal Arts Course (BITH 794)	0–	0–
Directed Research Course in conjunction with a Wheaton masters-level BTS class (BITH 793)	0–	0–
<b>Guided Research (BITH 795)</b>	1 or more	1 or more
Independent Study supervised by the mentor or another faculty member (for dissertation research)		
<b>Pedagogical Experience (BITH 798)</b>	1	2
Faculty-supervised teaching experience		
<b>Dissertation</b>		0
<b>Totals</b>		40–60

### 3.7. COURSE ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

Students should consult with their mentors before official registration. The mentor must approve the proposed course schedule each term. Students will submit their registration forms to the Program Administrator, who in turn will submit them to the Registrar’s Office.

Ph.D./BTS seminars are designed for Wheaton’s own Ph.D./BTS students. Enrollment of students from other institutions or of masters-level students from Wheaton, however, is allowed in cases where the professor of record and the field coordinators deem that the seminar experience will not suffer by and may benefit from the presence of the additional students.

### 3.8. GRADING

Ph.D./BTS seminars are awarded grades of “High Pass,” “Pass,” or “Fail.” Other Ph.D./BTS classes will be graded simply as “Pass” or “Fail.” Ordinarily, classes at outside institutions may not be taken as pass/fail. No grade below a B will be accepted.

### 3.9. COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FIELD

Since the Wheaton Ph.D./BTS program is designed to prepare teachers who are able to handle a potentially wide variety of classroom assignments, students in the program are expected to attain a

sufficiently comprehensive knowledge of their concentration (Biblical Studies/New Testament; Biblical Studies/Old Testament; Systematic Theology; Historical Theology) by the end of their program of study. In addition, since the Wheaton Ph.D./BTS program seeks to foster integrative learning, students will also be expected to become acquainted with significant literature, issues, and approaches pertaining to the other three concentrations. Since only exceptionally well-prepared students are admitted to the program, a high level of competence in the student's concentration will normally be in evidence at the time of matriculation. Comprehensive knowledge of the field is further encouraged and monitored during the program by the requirement of a portfolio. It will consist of the following:

- A record of any significant academic projects that may have fostered the student's general knowledge of the field before entering Wheaton.
- A transcript recording the student's course work in the Wheaton Ph.D./BTS program.
- A record of the student's other significant program activities, including but not necessarily limited to, their involvement in formal class teaching, informal tutorials, their attendance at special lectures, research related to their teaching fellowship duties, and papers read or published.
- A record of their general reading in their areas of specialization, especially that reading recommended in bibliographies prepared by faculty in each of the areas of specialization.

The student's mentor, with the assistance of another BTS faculty member (normally, the student's second reader), will have the responsibility of assessing this portfolio, following up with any pertinent questions (especially those related to the dissertation), and attesting to the student's completion of this degree requirement. The examination of the portfolio and the student's comprehensive knowledge of the field will normally be scheduled between the time when the dissertation defense draft is submitted and the time of the dissertation defense.

Note: When students first enroll in the program their supervisors will provide them with a reading list of scholarly works with which scholars with earned doctorates in their fields should be familiar. Students should include written records of their reading in their portfolios and use the completion of required works as occasions for regular conversations with their supervisor. The assigned readings must be completed before students defend their dissertations.

### 3.10. THE DISSERTATION

Each candidate for the Ph.D./BTS degree must submit an acceptable dissertation. The dissertation at Wheaton is expected to be a substantial contribution to research in the field of study, demonstrating originality, creativity, breadth of research, careful argumentation, interaction with modern non-English sources, and clear English style. In principle therefore a good dissertation will be publishable (certainly in the form of an article or articles).

The dissertation is the centerpiece of the doctoral enterprise. The topic should be chosen wisely, the proposal should be written after extensive appropriate reading, and the research should be done carefully and thoroughly.

### **3.10.1. Areas for Dissertation Research**

Dissertations at Wheaton should be theological in orientation. The Biblical Studies program emphasizes issues related to biblical theology, by which we mean biblical-theological readings of particular books or authors (e.g., theology of a particular book; a theme or doctrine developed by one or more books or authors; related theologies of two or more biblical books). This does not necessarily mean that every dissertation attempts ‘whole Bible theology’ in an overall, synthetic sense. The theological studies program emphasizes theological interpretation of Scripture, the history of biblical interpretation, historical theology in selected periods, and constructive evangelical theology.

Dissertations are not expected to be “integrative” in the sense that they must involve interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary work. While such integration is encouraged where natural and making a vital contribution to the central thesis and goal of the dissertation, it is not required that dissertations in theology involve the Old or New Testament as disciplines, nor that dissertations in Old or New Testaments involve systematic or historical theology as disciplines, nor that dissertations in Old Testament must involve the New Testament, and vice versa.

Wheaton admits to its Ph.D./BTS program only students who plan to write dissertations in areas of interest to the specified Ph.D. mentors. Students admitted to Wheaton’s Ph.D. program are encouraged to do preliminary work in the dissertation before arriving on campus. Such preliminary study will enable the student, in consultation with the mentor, to refine the dissertation area into an acceptable dissertation topic more quickly. Subject to the counsel of the mentor, students are also encouraged to consult other BTS faculty with expertise in their chosen area of studies.

### **3.10.2. The Dissertation Defense Committee**

The Dissertation Defense Committee consists of the mentor, a second reader (normally from the Wheaton BTS department), an external reader, and the Coordinator of the student’s major field (Theological Studies or Biblical Studies), who will act as the Dissertation Defense Committee Chair. In the event that the Coordinator is either the supervisor or second reader of the student’s dissertation, the coordinator of the alternate field or the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee will serve as Chair. The mentor works closely with the student throughout the production of the dissertation, offering regular guidance regarding the direction and content of the work. In consultation with their student, mentors should invite a BTS faculty member who can complement the strengths of the mentor in the chosen dissertation area to serve as second reader. The second reader will approve the dissertation proposal. The degree to which the second reader is involved in offering advice to the student will depend on the reader, the mentor, and the student. The external reader will be chosen toward the end of the dissertation process by the mentor in consultation with the field Coordinator. The student will not be notified of the identity of the external reader until a defense copy has been submitted. The external reader and field coordinators are normally not involved until a defense draft of the entire dissertation is produced.

### **3.10.3. Dissertation Proposal and Hearing**

A carefully designed proposal is required of all students. The purpose of the proposal is to force the student to think through the chosen topic carefully—especially in terms of its scope and method. A thoughtful and well-crafted proposal provides a roadmap for the writing of the dissertation that serves to focus and streamline the process. Students should seek to schedule a proposal hearing as early as

possible in their program and no later than the end of their first academic year of study. Students who are unable to meet this deadline must submit a letter with an explanation to their mentor who will explain their situation to the Ph.D. Committee.

The proposal should clearly and succinctly identify the proposed research topic, explain the methodology to be applied, indicate the need for such a study, provide a chapter-by-chapter outline, and conclude with a reasonably comprehensive bibliography (excluding standard reference sources and commentaries). The proposal may not exceed 10 pages in length (excluding the chapter outline, bibliography, and perhaps a timeline summary).

At the time of the proposal hearing (though not as a part of the proposal itself), students, in consultation with their mentor, should draw up a schedule for the production of the dissertation, including projected lengths and time of completion for each chapter.

The proposal should be approved by the mentor and second reader, as signified by their signatures on the Proposal Hearing Form. The student will submit the form to the Field Coordinator at the hearing. The student will then explain and defend his or her proposal before the Committee.

The proposal hearing is an open forum that other faculty and doctoral students—but in no cases family members—may attend. The hearing is chaired by the Ph.D. committee Chair. Only Ph.D. committee members and second readers may ask questions. Other students will not be present for the verdict.

Since the proposal describes an agreed-upon course of action, any change in content, outline, or title must be approved by the supervisor and major changes must be approved by the Ph.D. committee.

#### **3.10.4. Dissertation Composition and Editing Procedure**

The process of dissertation composition leading up to the initial draft should follow these steps:

- The student composes a chapter of the dissertation.
- The supervisor (and second reader as agreed upon) approves the content, argumentation, and format.
- The student submits the chapter and two–three pages of bibliography to the Ph.D. Program Administrator, who will apprise the student of any needed corrections in regard to style and format.
- The student revises the chapter and resubmits it to the supervisor.
- The student writes the rest of the dissertation, submitting chapters serially to the supervisor (and second reader as agreed upon).
- The student submits a hard copy of the complete first draft including front matter and bibliography to the supervisor (and the second reader as agreed upon). To test the accuracy of margin measurements, the student should print this copy on the printer that will be used for the final copies.

Prior to submission of the defense draft, the student will submit an electronic copy of the dissertation to the Program Administrator, who will check the word count and apprise the student of any needed corrections of style or format. (No dissertations will be sent to outside readers that reflect negatively on the faculty of Wheaton College or on the Ph.D. program.)



### 3.10.5. Planning for the Dissertation Defense Hearing

As the dissertation is reaching its final stages, in consultation with the mentor the student should begin planning for the defense hearing and dissertation completion. In general, the process should follow these steps:

- Securing an external reader  
When the student and mentor are reasonably sure that a full defense draft will be available within six months, the mentor, in consultation with the Coordinator of the student's major field (Theology or Biblical Studies), begins contact with an external reader. The field coordinator follows up this contact with an official letter of invitation, explaining the terms of the engagement.
- Submitting an initial full draft to the mentor  
The initial draft should be submitted to the mentor in hard copy and to the Program Administrator in electronic form at least three months before the hoped-for defense date. With the exception of the Dedication, Epigraph, and Acknowledgment pages, all the components of the dissertation are required. Once the mentor has read the initial draft, the mentor and student determine the timing of the defense draft and the defense itself. The mentor works with the BTS Graduate Studies Office Coordinator and Program Administrator to establish a date for the defense.
- Submitting of the defense draft  
When the defense draft of the dissertation is completed, the student must obtain the mentor's signature that the document is defensible. No fewer than forty-five days before the scheduled defense the student submits in person or by mail five unbound copies of the defense draft to the Program Administrator for distribution to (a) the external reader; (b) the supervisor; (c) the second reader; (d) the chair of the defense committee; (e) the Ph.D. Seminar Room.  
The defense draft of the dissertation must be as close to letter perfect as the student can make it, written in clear and accurate English and in conformity with appropriate program style. The mentor is responsible for ensuring that this is the case. The dissertation may not be amended before the defense hearing. The defense draft (and final copies) of the dissertation must not exceed 100,000 words in length, excluding front matter, bibliography and appendices. Longer drafts will not be accepted.

### 3.10.6. Deadlines for Graduation

Given the parameters noted above, receiving the degree at a particular graduation date will depend on meeting the following deadlines. **Note that meeting these deadlines in no way guarantees graduation at the specified time. The need for extensive revisions of either the initial or defense draft and/or extra time needed by the external reader to read the dissertation may prolong the process.** Students are not allowed to defend beyond the final spring semester of their program.

	<u>Dec. Graduation</u>	<u>May Graduation</u>	<u>Summer Graduation</u>
First draft	Aug. 1	Dec. 15	Jan. 1
Defense draft	Sept. 15	Feb. 1	Feb. 15
Hearings	Nov. 1–15	March 15–31	May 1–15

### 3.10.7. Dissertation Defense Hearing

The dissertation defense hearing is an open forum that other faculty and doctoral students—but in no cases family members—may attend. The candidate may bring only their dissertation, copies of the biblical text, and blank paper to the hearing. The Chair of the Dissertation Defense Committee will moderate the session. Normally, the Chair will ask the student’s mentor to open the session in prayer. The second reader and external reader will take the lead role in the oral examination. The mentor may choose to ask questions during the examination. Once the second reader, external reader, and mentor have concluded their questioning, the session will be open to appropriate questions from faculty. When the questioning has concluded, the Chair will dismiss the student whose dissertation is being examined as well as any students who have attended the session. The Chair will moderate the deliberations of the second reader and external reader, and will solicit input from other faculty members present. The second reader and external reader will determine the outcome of the hearing. In the event that the second reader and external reader cannot agree on a decision, the Chair will intervene and, if necessary, cast the deciding vote.

Four basic outcomes of the dissertation defense hearing are possible.

- (1) The default outcome is that the dissertation passes on condition that further revision is completed (in rare cases a new oral defense may be required as a condition).
- (2) The dissertation may sometimes pass with no required conditions but with recommended changes (typically oriented to broad improvements for seeking subsequent publication, rather than particular corrections or items needing to be addressed in the final dissertation copy).
- (3) In rare cases the dissertation may receive a “clear” pass with no required conditions or recommendations.
- (4) In rare cases the dissertation may be failed, the result of which is termination of the student’s program.

Any dissertation that passes, even under category (3) above, will still be subject to the technical reading process, with the student being expected to provide prompt correction of typos and formatting problems identified by the reader. The student and the supervisor are expected to make reasonable effort at providing a technically clean defense draft. The technical reader may identify clear grammatical errors that remain, but should not address details of prose style.

In the event that a defense hearing being chaired by a faculty member outside the discipline being considered (e.g., a theologian is chair of a biblical studies defense) results in an intractable disagreement between the second reader and external examiner over the question of whether the dissertation fails or passes, then the chair can rule a stalemate, and refer the verdict back to the Ph.D. committee, which shall choose a supplementary internal examiner from within the BTS department's faculty in that discipline if the second reader had rendered a fail or a supplementary external reader if the external reader had rendered a fail. The examiner will read the dissertation and provide a written report to the committee, including their recommendation about whether the dissertation should pass or fail. (The examiner would be compensated.) The Ph.D. committee must take the report into consideration in making the final decision about the verdict.

Students should be aware that dissertation defenses frequently result in minor and sometimes major revisions to the defense draft, often with new material. They should therefore schedule their defense hearing well before their anticipated graduation date. Once students have successfully defended the dissertation, they will be certified to walk in the next graduation ceremony even if revisions to the dissertation are still required. The degree will not, however, be officially granted until all program requirements have been completed.

### **3.10.8. Completion of the Dissertation Process**

If approved with conditions, the student revises the dissertation according to the guidelines established by the defense committee. The revised copy is submitted to the supervisor, second reader, and external reader for final approval. Either or both of the latter two may defer to the supervisor and authorize him/her to approve it on their behalf. Upon approval, the student will secure the signatures of the supervisor, second reader, and the Chair of the Dissertation Defense Committee on the copies of the dissertation signature page. In the event of a tie-breaker, the dissenting committee member is not obligated to sign the signature page. Instead, the word "dissenting" would be written on the signature line. Signatures may be obtained in advance at the defense hearing and held by the supervisor until all requirements are met.

After any required or recommended revisions have been made and are approved (if needed) by the supervisor, the final draft, along with a copy of the signed signature page and the dissertation tracking sheet

is electronically submitted to the Graduate Dean's Office (*from the student's Wheaton email address*) which in turn passes the copy to the technical reader. At this point in the process students can only make typographical corrections in the document. The technical reader's function is to ensure that the dissertation conforms technically and stylistically to official Wheaton Ph.D. Program standards in every respect (e.g., front matter, body, footnotes, appendices). Upon satisfactory completion of the technical reading process, the Graduate School Dean's Office will present the student with a signed copy of the Buswell Library Doctoral Dissertation Form. The student should keep in mind that the entire technical reading process may take as many as eight weeks to complete.

The student submits an electronic copy of the final version of the dissertation to the Program Administrator for final examination and approval.

The student prepares three unbound copies of the approved dissertation on the requisite paper—white bond, 20 pound weight, acid-free minimum 25 cotton/rag content, with a watermark—and submits them, along with the Doctoral Dissertation Form and associated fees, to the library for binding. One bound copy will be placed in the Ph.D. Seminar room, the second will be given to the supervisor, and the third to the second reader. Additional copies for personal use may be bound by the Library for an additional fee.

The student is also required to send a PDF copy of the dissertation to the library and to ProQuest/UMI Dissertation Publishing in Ann Arbor, MI (see instructions at <http://www.etsdadmin.com/cgi-bin/school?siteId=220>).

### 3.11. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS AND PROGRAM CONTINUATION

Students have a maximum of six years from the time of enrollment to finish the Ph.D. degree. If students do not complete the Ph.D. program within the six year limit, they will be dismissed from the program unless the student successfully petitions the Ph.D. Committee and the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC) for special consideration. Petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A petition to continue enrollment past six years must include a persuasive rationale for the program not being completed on time, and a detailed plan for completing the unfulfilled requirements in a timely manner. An Academic Petition form is used to request an extension. No continuation fees will be charged to the student.

#### 3.11.1. Excused Program Leave

For extraordinary reasons (e.g., prolonged illness, maternity leave or serious family crisis) that substantially limit their academic progress, a doctoral student may be granted a program leave. Those who wish to take such a temporary leave from the program should consult with their mentor who will inform the Graduate Student Care Office of the student's intent and if it is decided this would be a necessary request, the student will petition the Ph.D. Committee.

The petition letter should be written in collaboration with the supervisor and include:

1. The hardship circumstances responsible for the program leave request
2. Length and justification of leave time requested
3. Detailed plans for completing interrupted academic work
4. Show evidence of understanding:
  - a. the effect of the leave on institutional financial aid
  - b. repayment for title IV grants and/or loans
  - c. the impact on health insurance
5. Signed and dated by the student and the supervisor

This letter should be submitted as close as possible to the circumstance that precipitated the need. The committee will return a decision expeditiously. A program leave may be granted by the committee on more than one occasion but is not to exceed a total of two years. Once approved, the program leave will not be counted against the program's statute of limitations (six years) nor will the student be assessed continuation fees.

Students who have taken leave from the program for one or more semesters must petition the Ph.D. Committee to be re-admitted to the program. The committee will evaluate the student's petition and make a determination about the student's readiness for re-admission to the program. Students who leave the program for one or more years must petition the Ph.D. Committee, and if permitted to return to the program, must also reapply through the Graduate Admissions Office for reinstatement in the program. During a program leave, the student's supervisor is not expected to provide dissertation supervision.

When a student takes a program leave, the student will also no longer hold student status and therefore will need to access campus resources such as the library and SRC as a guest. The student will be responsible for initiating contact with these resources to understand the guest status.

If the student is approved for a program leave while currently enrolled and participating in a course, the student will initiate the withdrawal process with the Graduate Records and Registration office once the above steps have been completed. In some situations, they may also qualify for the institutional Leave of Absence policy which can be found in the Student Handbook with the full policy available in the Graduate Student Care office (BGC 228) and the Student Development Office (*SSB Suite 218*).

If the circumstances for this request are of a sensitive nature which the student prefers to not discuss in detail with the faculty, the student can first go to the Graduate Student Care Office who will work with the student on initiating the program leave process and provide information and insight on the student rights to the PhD committee in the decision making process.

### 3.12. TYPICAL PROGRAM PROGRESS

The scenario below assumes that, at matriculation, the student possesses superior competence in the biblical languages, is able to use German effectively in research, and has done preparatory work on the dissertation.

	FALL SEMESTER	SPRING SEMESTER
YEAR 1	Intro. to Doct. Research (BITH 751) (1 hr) Common Seminar (BITH 881) (3 hrs) Directed Research &/or Guided Research (8 hrs) (BITH 793, 794, 795) Dissertation Work	Intro. to Doct. Research (BITH 751, cont'd) Seminar (BITH 882 or 883) (4 hrs) Directed Research/Guided Research/Off- campus course (8 hrs) (BITH 793, 794, 795, etc.) Dissertation Proposal Hearing (at end of semester) Dissertation Work First-Year Evaluation
SUMMER	Finalize 2nd Research Language (Pass Competency Test before beginning 2nd year) Dissertation Work	
YEAR 2	Seminar (BITH 882 or 883) (4 hrs)  Directed Research/Guided Research/Off- campus course/Pedagogical experience (4-8 hrs) (BITH 793, 794, 795, 798, etc.) Dissertation Work	Common Capstone (BITH 884) (2 hrs) Seminar (BITH 882 or 883) (4 hrs)  Directed Research/Guided Research/Off- campus course (?)/Pedagogical experience (4-? hrs) (BITH 793, 794, 795, 798, etc.) Dissertation Work
SUMMER	Off-campus course (?)/Dissertation Work	
YEAR 3	Candidacy Dissertation/Continuation (BITH 898/899/999)  Dissertation Defense (in spring)	
YEAR 4	(When necessary) Dissertation Continuation (BITH 899/999)	

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## 4. ACADEMIC LIFE

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### 4.1. THE MENTOR

The Wheaton Ph.D./BTS program emphasizes the role of the mentor in the academic and spiritual formation of the doctoral student. Mentors work with comparatively few students at a time and are granted course load reduction for their work with doctoral students. The mentor therefore has considerable freedom in planning the student's specific program of studies, in advising the student on courses and the dissertation, and in evaluating the student's progress in the program. The mentor is responsible for overseeing the student's progress in attaining a sufficiently comprehensive knowledge of the field.

## 4.2. THE PH.D. COMMITTEE CHAIR

The Chair of the Ph.D. committee, under its authority, is responsible for chairing the meetings of the Committee, and for providing oversight of the program's main administrative functions and its liaison to the wider Wheaton College institutional structure.

## 4.3. THE FIELD COORDINATORS & PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

There are two field coordinators, one for Theological Studies and another for Biblical Studies. They work together with the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee to give oversight to the program and to foster community amongst the students and faculty.

Their particular responsibilities are focused on working with students and faculty in the program on academic matters related to their respective disciplinary areas.

There is also a Program Administrator who is responsible for managing the day-to-day organizational life of the program.

## 4.4. THE PH.D. COMMITTEE

The Ph.D. Committee is charged with oversight of the Ph.D./BTS program. The Committee consists of the Associate Dean, the other dedicated Ph.D. faculty members (the holders of the Blanchard chairs, the Knoedler chair, and the Wessner chair), as well as a BTS undergraduate faculty representative selected each year by the Associate Dean (in consultation with the Dean of Humanities and Theological Studies), and one student from the program (chosen by his or her fellow students).

The Committee serves as an informed body of "advice and consent" with respect to participant recruitment and selection, faculty selection and assignment, curriculum substance and structure, and dissertation research standards and emphases. It may also be called upon by the Dean of Graduate Studies or the Academic Deans to deal with extraordinary issues such as student appeals and disputes about the meaning or implementation of policy.

## 4.5. GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

### 4.5.1. English Style and Format Guidelines

The required manual of style for the proposal and the dissertation is the Wheaton Ph.D. Dissertation Style Guide. Students may choose to format their dissertations according to a particular edition of the style guide published later than the handbook under which they entered the program without having to switch to that year's handbook, but they must remain consistent in the application of that style guide. Style and format questions distinctive to the dissertation not covered in the Style Guide are sometimes treated in Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (7<sup>th</sup> ed., rev. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), *The Chicago Manual of Style* (15th ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago, 2003), or *The SBL Handbook of Style* (ed. Patrick H. Alexander, et al.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999). Students should cultivate early the habit of formatting their papers according to the Style Guide. All papers submitted for coursework in the doctoral programs are expected to conform to these standards. The Ph.D. Program

Administrator, under the authority of the Ph.D. Program Committee, serves as arbiter in all matters of dissertation style and format.

#### **4.5.2. English Writing Skills**

Students whose mother tongue is not English are expected to demonstrate a level of English proficiency at the time of admission into the program. These, however, are often inadequate indicators of a student's English writing skills. Students should be aware that seminar papers and the final draft of the dissertation are expected to be not only in proper style and format, but also well written employing correct English grammar and idioms.

Though the Dissertation mentor will be helpful in these situations, it is not the mentor's responsibility to re-write the dissertation or make detailed corrections to the draft. Moreover, if the English is particularly obscure or problematic, the mentor may require the student to correct and improve early drafts as well as the final draft. Students needing help with their English writing skills are encouraged to make arrangements for assistance and may consult their mentor or the Wheaton College Writing Center located in Buswell Memorial Library for help.

#### **4.5.3. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the direct quotation or use of ideas or writings of another person without giving written acknowledgment of the source. The student is responsible for knowing the difference between the legitimate and illegitimate use of published and unpublished source material. If there is any doubt, counsel should be sought from the student's mentor.

Substantial penalties will be assessed if a student is found to be guilty of plagiarism. See the Graduate School Student Handbook for details. Since a consequence of plagiarism is the automatic failure of the assignment with no opportunity for re-write, a student found guilty of plagiarism in his or her dissertation will be dismissed from the program.

### **4.6. INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES**

Wheaton College has a number of resources that are particularly important for those pursuing research doctoral programs. These resources include the campus library and archives.

#### **4.6.1. Campus Library and Archives**

Buswell Memorial Library contains approximately one million items, including books, journals, sound recordings, scores, and audio-visual materials. The College Archives & Special Collections, a department of Buswell Library, houses extensive collections of published and unpublished records in numerous subjects. The Evangelism and Missions Collection is located within the College Archives & Special Collections and holds materials relating to missions, revival, and evangelism. The Billy Graham Center Archives collects unpublished records of the history of North American nondenominational Protestant efforts to spread the Christian Gospel. The Marion E. Wade Center is a special collection of the books and papers of seven British authors who are well-known for their impact on contemporary literature and Christian thought: Owen Barfield, G. K. Chesterton, C. S. Lewis, George MacDonald, Dorothy L. Sayers, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams.



Buswell Library is the hub of the participant's research efforts. The participant is expected to be familiar with specific research tools, bibliographical services, basic and abstract indexes, computer-based search systems, journals, and dissertations. The reference librarians welcome requests for assistance or training. Buswell Library user services include individual and group library instruction, Interlibrary Loan, Reserves, and a research-oriented website that provides access on and off campus to many catalogs, digital journal collections, and academic databases. A conscious attempt has been made to develop an unusually fine reference library for advanced biblical studies, consisting of all essential lexicons, encyclopedias, dictionaries, bibliographies, periodical indexes, and related volumes. Buswell Library is open every day but Sunday, and offer various services designed to assist participants and faculty in study and research.

#### **4.6.2. Interlibrary Loan**

Wheaton students and faculty are able to borrow materials from other libraries through Buswell Library's participation in two resource-sharing networks, **I-Share** and **WorldCat**. I-Share is the union catalog for 80 Illinois academic libraries. WorldCat is a worldwide union catalog of over 72,000 libraries. Only if Wheaton users cannot find an available copy in I-Share do they request the item through WorldCat using a request system called **ILLiad**.

#### **4.6.3. Other Area Libraries**

Students are also encouraged to make good use of other university and theological research libraries in the Chicago area that are not in I-Share. Valuable collections include those of the Newberry Library, Northwestern University Library, and the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago. The Newberry Library is one of the world's outstanding research libraries for the humanities, with special strengths in Western European and American history from the Renaissance through World War I. Although religion is not one of its specialties, it is rich in theological materials, including a good number of rare books, first and early editions. The Center for Research Libraries was established in the early 1950s by a group of major Midwestern university research libraries to house little-used and rare research materials, which it maintains and disseminates. Strengths include collections of textbooks, worldwide newspapers, and government and state documents. Among its rare items are 16th and 17th-century pamphlets, and it houses under one roof the world's largest collection of foreign doctoral dissertations. Information and assistance on accessing these collections is available in Buswell Memorial Library.

#### **4.6.4. Study Carrels**

Study carrels are provided for all Ph.D./BTS students through their third year and often beyond in Buswell Memorial Library. Students are also urged to use the Seminar Room—when meetings or classes are not being held—as a gathering place for conversation and shared research.