

WRITING A DISSERTATION PROPOSAL IN THE HUMANITIES: **RELIGION**

Note:

This information is intended to serve as a general guide to outlining a dissertation proposal in Religion. Specific expectations may vary by committee. You should always ascertain the requirements of your specific advisor/committee members before completing the dissertation proposal.

Length:

The dissertation proposal is typically about 20-30 pages in length including the works cited list.

Contents:

1. Introduction

- a. The introduction should provide context for your project, lay out some of the specific questions your project will address, and reference how it fits into the larger scholarly conversations of your field. This section should provide a compelling and engaging introduction to your topic, similar to what you would hope to achieve in the first paragraphs of a research paper.

2. Literature Review

- a. The literature review should give a comprehensive overview of the most relevant existing scholarship related to your work, as well as what gaps in the existing research your work looks to fill.
- b. This section may be written in continuous form or broken up by topic depending on the nature of your work.

3. Methodology and Sources

- a. This section should elaborate on your specific primary sources (including but not limited to texts or oral histories) and how you plan to use them in your dissertation. It should also briefly lay out the specific methodological approach(es) you plan to use to analyze your sources. This might include the

specific theoretical frameworks you intend to employ and how these will ultimately come together to connect your sources to the larger argument you are making in your dissertation. This section may also include a brief expected timeline of your dissertation work.

4. *Significance and Expected Contributions*

- a. This section should briefly explain the relevance of your topic both for the wider field of study and for its connection to real-world implications.

5. *Chapter Outline*

- a. This section should briefly lay out your planned chapter progression (including introduction and conclusion) and include a short description (not more than a paragraph) of the main topics/arguments of each chapter.

6. *Preliminary Bibliography*

- a. This section (typically no more than 4-5 pages) should lay out the initial list of relevant secondary sources that you have used in completing the dissertation proposal or that you plan to use in writing the dissertation.

More information on the dissertation proposal in Religion may be found at:

<https://cgu0.sharepoint.com/sites/SAH/SitePages/Religion.aspx>