

**Assessment Grid for Masters of Arts (Biblical Studies)  
July, 2023**

**Assessment Team:** Drs. Charlie Ray III, Cory Barnes, and Ethan Jones

**Terms Assessed:** Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2022, Spring 2023

***Student Learning Objective 1: Students will demonstrate their understanding and ability to interpret and communicate accurately biblical, theological, and historical truth.  
ATS Standard 4.8***

<b>Measures</b>	<b>Prior Assessment</b>	<b>Current Assessment</b>	<b>Action Plan Steps to Achieve the New Benchmark</b>
<p><u>Direct Measure #1</u> Systematic Theology 1. This assignment was assessed using a rubric.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the relevant chapters from your main text, as well as three to four other sources (books, essays, commentaries on Romans 1:18-32, etc), briefly explain your understanding of the doctrine of general revelation, highlighting the differences between general and special revelation. What impact does the doctrine of general revelation have on your understanding of missions and evangelism? Describe how the doctrine of general revelation can affect your communication of the Gospel.</li> </ul>	<p>New metrics due to curriculum change</p>	<p>Spring 21: 3.4 (10 students) Fall 21: 3.52 (18 students) Spring 22: 3.17 (6 students) Fall 22: 2.98 (16 students) Spring 23: 3.30 (10 students)</p> <p><b>Avg. 3.28 (60 students)</b></p> <p><u>Reflections</u> With the exception of 1 semester (Fall 22), each semester the students averaged over 3.0 (which is qualified as “good” results). The last 1.5 years of data were lower than the prior year, so while we are pleased with the 3.28 average, we do want to see this trend reversed. Data is limited for this measure due</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New benchmark: 3.28</p> <p>While we are not setting a new benchmark here, as we continue to track these scores, we will need to make adjustments if we continue to see a negative trend in these numbers.</p>

		to a shift in embedded assignments used in this course.	
<p><u>Direct measure #2</u> Summative Assignment Rubric Metric #1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student demonstrated the ability to understand the field of biblical studies.</li> </ul>	New metrics due to curriculum change	<p>Spring 2020: 3.0 (1 student) Fall 2020: 3.0 (5 students) Spring 2021: 2.0 (1 student) Fall 2021: 1.5 (2 students) Spring 2022: 4.0 (1 student) Fall 2022: 2.5 (2 students)</p> <p>PhD: 2.5 (8 students) R&amp;W: 3.0 (4 students) Thesis: 3.0 (1 student)*</p> <p><b>Avg.: 2.69 (12 students)</b></p> <p><u>Reflections</u> This score was the lowest of the 3 scores taken from the students' summative assessments. We also noticed that students who took the PhD seminar as their summative assessment scored the lowest here.</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New benchmark: 2.72</p> <p>We will recommend to the division to adapt a course that we currently offer in our curriculum. The course, Encountering the Biblical World, is currently required of all of our MA (Biblical Studies) students. This course currently focuses heavily on the archeological background for Biblical Studies. We will recommend adjusting this course to cover the field of Biblical Studies more broadly.</p>

<p><u>Indirect measure #1</u> Exit Interview Question 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent have you grown in your understanding of biblical, theological, and historical truth? How? (0-4 scale)</li> </ul>	<p>New metrics due to curriculum change</p>	<p><b>4.0 (10 students)</b></p> <p><u>Reflections</u> All students who took the exit interview gave a rating of 4 out of 4 on this question.</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New benchmark: 4.0</p> <p>We recommend keeping this benchmark the same since there is no room for improvement here.</p>
<p><u>Indirect measure #2</u> Systematic Theology 1 Course Evaluation Questions (1-5 scale)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2- The content of this course expanded my knowledge and skills in this area of study.</li> <li>6- I can take things I learned in this course and apply them to my ministry situation.</li> <li>7- The assignments in this course were appropriate and helped me learn the subject matter.</li> </ul>	<p>New metrics due to curriculum change</p>	<p><b>Avg. #2: 4.77</b> Spring 2020: 4.8 Fall 2020: 4.8 Spring 2021: 4.7 Fall 2021: 4.8 Spring 2022: 4.8 Fall 2022: 4.7</p> <p><b>Avg. #6: 4.67</b> Spring 2020: 4.7 Fall 2020: 4.6 Spring 2021: 4.6 Fall 2021: 4.7 Spring 2022: 4.7 Fall 2022: 4.7</p> <p><b>Avg. #7: 4.72</b> Spring 2020: 4.8</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New benchmarks: #2: 4.77 #6: 4.67 #7: 4.72</p> <p>We recommend keeping these benchmarks the same moving forward.</p>

		<p>Fall 2020: 4.7  Spring 2021: 4.7  Fall 2021: 4.8  Spring 2022: 4.6  Fall 2022: 4.7</p> <p><u>Reflections</u>  We are pleased with these scores and feel that they represent broad student satisfaction in these areas since the majority of students rated each of these areas as either good (4) or excellent (5).</p>	
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\* We currently offer MA (Biblical Studies) students three options for completing their summative assignment: taking a PhD seminar (PhD), taking a Biblical Studies Research and Writing course (R&W) or writing a thesis (Thesis).

***Student Learning Objective 2: Students will demonstrate improved skills in research and writing in the field of biblical studies.***

*ATS Standard 4.8*

Measures	Prior Assessment	Current Assessment	Action Plan Steps to Achieve the New Benchmark
<p><u>Direct measure #1</u></p> <p>Summative Assignment Rubric Metric #2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student showed clear and logical argumentation in his or her ability to develop a thesis.</li> </ul>	<p>New metrics due to curriculum change</p>	<p>Spring 2020: 4.0 (1 student)            Fall 2020: 2.6 (5 students)            Spring 2021: 2.0 (1 student)            Fall 2021: 2.0 (2 students)            Spring 2022: 4.0 (1 student)            Fall 2022: 3.0 (3 students)</p> <p>PhD: 2.63 (8 students)            R&amp;W: 2.75 (4 students)            Thesis: 4.0 (1 student)*</p> <p><b>Avg. 2.77 (13 students)</b></p> <p><u>Reflections</u>            We again noticed that students who took the PhD seminar scored the lowest on this direct measure.</p> <p>Student comments on the exit interview also indicated a lack of emphasis in the curriculum on the development of a thesis and logical argumentation prior to the summative assignment.</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New Benchmark: 2.8</p> <p>See below under recommendations for Direct measure #2.</p>

<p><u>Direct measure #2</u> Summative Assignment Rubric Metric #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student clearly communicated the results of his or her research in an understandable manner.</li> </ul>	<p>New metrics due to curriculum change</p>	<p>Spring 2020: 3.0 (1 student) Fall 2020: 3.0 (5 students) Spring 2021: 2.0 (1 student) Fall 2021: 2.5 (2 students) Spring 2022: 4.0 (1 student) Fall 2022: 3.33 (3 students)</p> <p>PhD: 2.88 (8 students) R&amp;W: 3.25 (4 students) Thesis: 3.0 (1 student)*</p> <p><b>Avg.: 3.00 (13 students)</b></p> <p><u>Reflections</u> Once again, students who took the PhD seminar scored the lowest in this area, meaning that they scored lower than students who took the Biblical Studies Research and Writing course on all three areas of the Summative Assignment.</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New benchmark: 3.05</p> <p>We will recommend to the division that we adjust the curriculum to require all students to take the Biblical Studies Research and Writing course. Students will still be allowed to take a PhD seminar or to write a thesis, but they must do so in addition to taking this course. We believe this change will help raise scores on both direct measures #1 and #2.</p>
<p><u>Indirect Measure #1</u> Exit Interview Question 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent have you improved in your research and writing skills? How? (0-4 scale)</li> </ul>	<p>New metrics due to curriculum change</p>	<p><b>Avg.: 3.9 (10 students)</b></p> <p><u>Reflections</u> Of the 10 students who completed the exit interview, 9 rated this area as excellent, and 1 rated it as good.</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New Benchmark: 3.9</p> <p>We see no need for a change in this benchmark since we think it represents</p>

			high student satisfaction in this area.
<p><u>Indirect Measure #2</u> Course Evaluations (OTHB6351; NTGK6351)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2- The content of this course expanded my knowledge and skills in this area of study.</li> <li>● 7- The assignments in this course were appropriate and helped me learn the subject matter.</li> </ul>	New metrics due to curriculum change	<p><b>Avg. #2: 4.7</b> Fall 2022: 5.0 (OTHB6351 N.O.) Spring 2023: 4.8 (NTGK6351 N.O.) 5.0 (NTGK6351 online) 4.0 (OTHB6351 online)</p> <p><b>Avg. #7: 4.45</b> Fall 5.0 (OTHB6351 N.O.) Spring 2023: 4.8 (NTGK6351 N.O.) 5.0 (NTGK6351 online) 3.0 (OTHB6351 online)</p> <p><u>Reflections</u> We noted that the online scores in this area are lower than the in-person scores.</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>Due to limited data for these courses (see below), we are not recommending any changes at this point.</p>

OTHB6351 and NTGK6351 are additions to the new MA (Biblical Studies) curriculum. As such, we have only two semesters of data for these courses. These courses also tend to be smaller courses, so the sample size for this data is limited.

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***Student Learning Objective 3: Students will demonstrate personal and spiritual maturity.***  
*ATS Standard 4.8*

Measures	Prior Assessment	Current Assessment	Action Plan Steps to Achieve the New Benchmark
<p><u>Direct measure #1</u></p> <p>Discipleship and Spiritual Formation. This assignment was assessed using a rubric.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each student will create a creative and visual personal discipleship map that depicts spiritual formation and his/her discipleship plan relating to the importance of spiritual maturity, spiritual disciplines, and relationships. The map should include a biblical foundation for spiritual formation, personal spiritual disciplines/devotional practices, and engagement</li> </ul>	<p>New metrics due to curriculum change</p>	<p>Fall 2022:            3.04 (6 students, N.O.)            3.14 (14 students, online)</p> <p><b>Avg. 3.11 (20 students)</b></p> <p><u>Reflections</u>            The data for these courses is very limited.**</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New benchmark: 3.11</p> <p>We do not recommend any changes here until we have more data.</p>



<p>in relationships through mentoring, and groups.</p>			
<p><u>Indirect measure #1</u> Exit Interview Question 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent have you grown spiritually and in moral integrity through your program? How?</li> </ul>	<p>New metrics due to curriculum change</p>	<p><b>3.4 (10 students)</b></p> <p><u>Reflections</u></p> <p>This score was markedly lower than the other two scores taken from the student exit interviews (4.0 and 3.9). Student comments on the exit interviews indicated that some students did not see this as a major focus in the degree.</p> <p>We also noted that the phrasing of this question, particularly related to “moral integrity” might not communicate exactly what we are looking for.</p>	<p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>New benchmark: 3.5</p> <p>Over the next year, we will devote a portion of our division meetings to training on how to engage our students spiritually, both in in-person courses and in online courses.</p> <p>We will have one faculty member who excels in this area train us on engaging spiritual formation in in-person classes, and one faculty member will offer training on how to do this in online classes.</p> <p>We will also recommend to the division a change in the language for this question on the exit interview: “To what extent have you grown spiritually and in your love for God and neighbor through your program? How?” We believe that this</p>

			phrasing of the question better fits our MA (Biblical Ar) curriculum and what we are trying to accomplish through this degree.
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\*\* The Discipleship and Spiritual Formation Course represents a change to the curriculum, so we have limited data for this course. This class has only been part of the curriculum for two semesters.

**Executive Summary**

The Biblical Studies faculty voted to approve a new curriculum for the MA (Biblical Studies) on February 9, 2022. The new curriculum was subsequently approved by the faculty and the trustees for implementation in August of 2022. We just finished the first year of classes with the new curriculum.

Due to the curriculum change, the Biblical Studies faculty approved a new assessment grid on August 5, 2022. While this change represented a significant shift from our last assessment, we feel that the current assessment measures represent substantive improvements. Many of the former courses that we used for assessment are no longer a part of the degree (or are now listed as admissions requirements for the degree). But we believe the addition of the summative assignment as a part of the assessment represents a marked step forward in our ability to assess this degree. The summative assignment was not a new addition to the curriculum, so we were able to access data for this assignment for the entire assessment period. The addition of the NTGK6351 and OTHB6351 courses will also provide us valuable data for indirect measures moving forward.