

Writing Theology:

RST Research Manual

fourth edition



RECOLETOS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

81 Alondrs St. Miranila Homes Subdivision
Congressional Avenue Extension
1107 Quezon City, Philikkppines
www.rst.edu.ph

CHED Recognized Graduate School of Theology
Affiliate of the Royal and Pontifical
UNIVERSITY OF STO. TOMAS (MANILA)

EDITION 2021

Leander Barrot, OAR

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Recoletos School of Theology (RST) through the Years

Recoletos School of Theology (RST) located at 81 Alondras Street, Mira-Nila Homes, Congressional Avenue Extension, Quezon City is the theology school of the Order of the Augustinian Recollects under the supervision of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno.

As a theological center, it offers an ecclesiastical curriculum in Bachelor of Arts in Sacred Theology (SThB) affiliated to the University of Santo Tomas (UST) and a civil degree program—Master of Arts in Theology (MAT) with various majors, recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

The story of RST is diametrically connected with the Recoletos Formation Center (RFC). Both RFC and RST trace their beginnings from the early eighties following an increase in the number of Augustinian Recollect vocations in the Philippines. These, after finishing college degree and novitiate were sent to Marcilla, Spain for theological studies.

The desire to form Augustinian Recollect religious and priests within the cultural context in which they would exercise their apostolate increased; and this led to the erection of a theological house in the Philippines dedicated to the formation of Filipino Recollects. This was given a go signal by Most Rev. Javier Ruiz Pascual, OAR, the Augustinian Recollect Prior General. Initially, the theological seminary was patterned after the long experience of the Mother Province—the Province of San Nicolas de Tolentino relative to theological formation.

The seminary, named as Recoletos Formation Center, was solemnly blessed and inaugurated by Fr. Jose Antonio Calvo, OAR on December 5, 1985. The first rector—Fr. Emeterio Buñao, OAR together with Fr. Hubert Decena, OAR, as Dean of Studies and other members of the community--administered the formation program and theological

training of future Recollect religious and priests. The same seminary housed the Novitiate program from 1985-1987.

Due to an insufficient number of professors, RFC entered into partnership with St. Vincent School of Theology (SVST), an affiliate of Adamson University, for the degree of Master of Arts in Theology. Two years after, in 1987, the school entered into a partnership with the Institute of Graduate Studies (IGS) of San Sebastian College-Recoletos of Manila. In 1995, with the gradual increase of Recollect and non-Recollect theology professors, the seminary became an affiliate of the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, Manila for the Bachelor of Arts degree in Sacred Theology (SThB) program. In 2001, the academic program of RFC adopted Recoletos School of Theology (RST) as its official name; and by June of 2011, the Graduate School of Theology started processing requirements with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) towards the establishment of the Recoletos Graduate School of Theology offering Master of Arts in Theology major in Systematic Theology and Church History.

Following the curriculum design of the Ecclesiastical Faculty of UST, to which RST is affiliated, RST shifted to a three-year curriculum program beginning school year 2011-2012 to achieve the Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees in Theology. In May 2015, the school witnessed her first batch of graduates who underwent the three-year academic program. In 2014, the school also obtained permission from CHED to admit students from other nationalities.

Today, RST is committed to be a comprehensive ecclesiastical learning institution and a civil degree provider for higher learning. The school continues to be the center for theological and religious formation of the Order of Augustinian Recollects of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno in the Philippines. The school is served by the Bulwagang Recoletos, a two-storey building, housing the St. Augustine Library, Audio Visual Room with 120 sitting capacity, Museo Recoleta, Archivo Recoleta, Conservation Laboratory and function halls. It also boasts of a pool of professors from different Orders and religious congregations and dioceses, added to its regular team of Recollect professors.

Through the years the school also accepted students from different Orders, Congregations, and Pious Unions such as the, Congregation of the Sons of the Immaculate Conception (CFIC), Emmanuel Servants of the Holy Trinity (ESHT), Congregation of the Servants of Charity

(SC), Order of St. Augustine, (OSA) (The Vicariate of the Orient), The Oblates of the Virgin Mary (OMV), Priests of the Sacred Heart (SCJ), the Dominican Missionaries for the Deaf Apostolate (OP Miss.), Missionaries of Mother Mary of the Poor (MMMP), Marian Missionaries of the Holy Cross (MMHC), The Clerical Congregation of the blessed Korean (BMC), Disciples of Hope (DS), Benedictine Celestine (OSB), Apostolic Vicariate of Taytay and (AVT), Diocese of Tandag.

Fr. Maximilian Omem, OAR

Preface to the Third Edition

This is a third edition of the RST Research Manual. This edition continues where the first two editions stopped. The former editions have contributed enormously to the establishment of a research culture for it articulated and organized the research practices and procedures of the institution in the last decades. Significantly, the editions have given an imprimatur to the specific research style, format and procedures to be followed by the institution in the conduct of the Final Paper Requirement for the Master of Arts in Theology Degree (MAT) program.

This 2017 edition pursues the vision of producing writing theologians imbued with improved research discipline and technique through a unified research methodology throughout the formative years at RST. Likewise, it encourages researchers to draw from a theological fount pastoral or missiological slant to the pressing issues and concerns confronted by theology in general and the universal and Local Church, thus, contributing to the advancement of theological discussions and to the on-going new evangelization engagement of the Church.

This 2017 edition takes on a special character for it interprets CMO 12 on “Policies and Standards for Graduate Catholic Theological and Religious Education Master’s Program.” It has gotten the nod from CHed as an acceptable format in thesis writing for Recoletos School of Theology.

This edition would not have been completed without the valuable contributions of Fray Omem who researched on the story of RFC and RST, Rev. Hamo, Tanquis, Baldelovar, Saludes and Dineros who conducted interviews on the status of the research endeavors of the institution.

Fr. Leander V. Barrot, OAR, SSL
Research, Publication, Planning and Development (2016)

Preface to the Fourth Edition

Five years after the printing, dissemination, and implementation of the third edition of the research manual for RST signals an appropriate time to create a new version or a fourth edition of this important manual.

This fourth edition is a product of the five-year operation of the research office implementing the processes and procedures of research operations of the institution. As research endeavors progress, weaknesses and areas needing attention cropped in. These are like crevices on the wall needing repairs and patching up. This fourth edition intends not only to document the changes but also to improve operations and enhance output consistency.

Greatly revised is Article IV on “Research Processes and Procedures.” Since RST follows and implements the Master of Arts in Theology (MAT) thesis program, this particular section was re-written to comply with the program requirements of CHED. This section, therefore, is to guide the conduct of the Terminus Paper Writing or the Thesis writing of the theology students of RST from conception to final submission.

May this fourth edition be of great help to improve the writing skills and competencies of the theology students of RST.



Fr. Leander V. Barrot, OAR
RST: Rector (2021)

Vision

A theological center for communion, research,
and faith-Experience

Mission

To foster theological dialogue, academic excellence,
and social involvement.

Core Values

Caritas, Scientia, et Sapientia

Article I

Research, Publications, and Planning and Development Office

Sec 1. Goals and Objectives

Goals

The office, by its title, has three diverse but interconnected functions: a research center for Recoletos School of Theology, a center for Publication, and Planning and Development. The office has a decent over-arching goals—To promote among members of the Recoletos School of Theology a passion for research-based theological thinking and writing and a theologico-pastoral publication output.

Objectives

To achieve these dual goals, the office commits itself to fulfill the desired outcomes:

- To establish a well-coordinated research agenda so as to foment a research environment for RST,
- To unify research methodologies, style and format, and publication,
- To standardize processes and procedures on research endeavors and publications,
- To enhance research attitude and aptitude; and strengthen research capabilities of the RST community,
- To align, where it is feasible, with NHERA of CHEd,
- To promote and publish theologico-pastoral and Recollect-related research agenda and outputs, and
- To promote *Quaerens* for local and international journal exchange.

Sec 2. Organizational Structure: Duties and Responsibilities

Research and Publication Officers

Research Director/(Asst. Dir)

The Research Director performs the following functions and responsibilities:

- Is responsible for the Research Program of the Recoletos School of Theology; and, when it is possible, he is to teach the TPW courses to align the research endeavours of the whole institution,
- Revises and updates the research manuals regularly,
- Incorporates in the research classes explanations relative to the Research Policies and Guidelines of the institution, and the RST's Research Manual on Styles,
- Guides student researchers, in collaboration with the adviser, the formulation of the thesis question in view of thesis proposal defense,
- Guides and regularly monitors the student researchers toward the completion of the thesis project according to set standards and schedule,
- Decides on which theses are proper for publications in the official publications of the institution,
- Creates a data base for all research publications of RST,
- Acts as chair in the conduct of the thesis defense (both the proposal and final), or in his absence assigns a substitute chair,
- Forwards to the office of the Dean the final grade of the research output of theology student researcher,
- Approves the designation of the thesis adviser,
- Recommends experts to act as panelists for the thesis defense,
- Monitors the final phase (post research defense procedure) of the research output,
- Monitors the completion of the research within the allotted time schedule,
- Is in charge of the publication of researches,
- Revisits and implements the manual on processes and procedures for the refereeing of research contribution to Quaerens,

- Initiates and sustains journal exchange of Quaerens with other theological institutions,

Researcher and Research Ancillary Team (RAT)

Theology Researcher

A student doing the Terminal Paper Writing (TPW) or Thesis Writing has the following responsibilities:

- Takes full responsibility of the research work from the choice of the research question up to its completion of the research study,
- Chooses his desired adviser based on expertise and formally recommends him/her to the Research Director,
- Collaborates closely with the adviser as well as the research center in the completion of his research study through regular meetings, submission of research work, and seeking the approval for defense (proposal and final),
- Takes responsibility in fulfilling and filling of all necessary forms for the completion of the research study,
- Engages in his research with passion and dedication,
- Takes responsibility in the choice of his Research Ancillary Team (RAT), i.e., language editor, statistician, form and style editor; and recommends these to the Office of the Research Director for record purposes and the giving of honorarium,
- Fulfills the research requirements within the designated period,
- Completes the necessary post defense obligations to the research department, the advisers as well as to the RAT,
- Takes on the responsibilities as determined for the conduct of research defense (proposal and final), and
- Has to demonstrate a spirit of gratitude to all those who contributed to the completion of his research endeavor.

Major Term Paper and Thesis Advisers

Requested by the Theology Student researcher and accepting, with a great act of charity to help the student pursue a specific theological research, the adviser performs the following tasks:

- Works closely and encourages the student researcher towards the completion of the research study,
- Discusses with the student researcher the theological intricacies of the research undertaken,
- Reminds the researcher about the timetable, research requirements and form and style of RST; and is to be present during the defense (proposal and final defense),
- Gives comments when necessary during the conduct of the research defenses,
- Approves and endorses the research work for defense (proposal and final),
- Signs the final completion document, after a thorough review of the research work.

Research Ancillary Team (RAT)

The RAT is an optional team to help the Researcher. However, it is highly advisable that the researcher chooses his own RAT to help him re-read, edit and finalize his research final output. In this case, the researcher is to communicate officially to the office of the Research Director their curriculum vitae for documentation and honorarium allocation. Their functions are the following:

Language Editor

- Reviews the research work as to its syntax, expressions, grammar, and proper punctuation.
- (Nota Bene) Researches for proposal and final defense are to go through a thorough language review. No research work is to be submitted for defense unless reviewed by the language editor.

Research Technical (Form and Style) Editor

- Assists in the technical requirements of the thesis i.e. fulfilling of the required form and style mandated by RST manual.
- (Nota Bene) The researcher may on his own take this responsibility.

Defense Secretary

- Takes notes during the defense proceedings (Major Term Paper, Thesis proposal and Final) so these can be incorporated into the final revision of the research work.

Thesis Defense Panel

The Research Director creates a panel of experts for the Term Paper and Thesis Defense exercises. The choice of the panelist is based on expertise. It is preferred that the panelists for the proposal defense be the same to examine the final research output during the final thesis defense. In case of the absence of any of the members of the panelist, the Director may choose a substitute panelist or the Director or the Dean, as the case maybe, substitutes for the absent panelist. The Panelists are to be given at least two (2) weeks of preparation prior to the scheduling of the thesis proposal defense. These are to perform the following functions of responsibilities:

- To give pertinent advice so as to improve the research paper,
- To evaluate the research work based on the criteria set by the institution,
- To suggest to the Research Director the deferment of the final defense of a thesis or major term paper defense if there are major corrections and observations on the submitted research work. In this case, the Research Director, upon the advise of the panelist(s) returns the research work for revision and corrections.
- To submit to the office of the Research Director their comments so the researcher may address the concerns and issues prior to the final defense.

Article II

Research Agenda, Acceptability Criteria, and Skills and Values

Sec. 1. Research Agenda

Writing theology or making sense of theology in a society, for people, and in personal relations with God involves in engaging in a particular area of the theology spectrum. RST is open to a wide range of theological engagements from which students can make a significant theological contribution through research. The sources for theological inquiry could be from any of the following branches of theology:

Biblical Theology

To delve into scriptural or biblical themes from the Old Testament, New Testament and even the inter-testamental literature and era,

Church History

To investigate on themes and topics of the Catholic church's presence, contribution, influence, and significance to society and religious belief systems or the contribution of the early church father (patristic period) to the development of faith, moral and understanding and their present implications and applications;

Pastoral and Missiological Theology

To explore the responsibilities, accountability, and applicability of the different branches of theology in the practical aspects of life, i.e. morals, liturgical worship, discipline of the church, as well as the position and place of theology across cultural, social, and ethnological diversity;

Systematic or Dogmatic Theology

To explain and clarify doctrinal and faith statements stemming from scriptural sources or to fill-in the gaps in order to bridge life, doctrine, and faith;

Spirituality

To deepen the Charismatic gifts received from the Church by the founding personalities of pious groups, congregations and orders; and to find their relevance to the present experiences and socio-cultural contexts;

Contemporary Theological Issues

To contribute to present theological debates on ecology, creation, Bioethics, ecumenism, feminism, fundamentalism and other recent involvements and engagements of the Church.

Sec. 2. Criteria for Theological Research Acceptability

Theological

A research, be it a term paper, or thesis, has to be theological in nature. The main research problem needs to stem from any of the various branches of theology. It has to be rooted in any of the fields enumerated in the “Research Agenda” (c.f. above) of the institution. However, it is not necessary that all sub-questions have to be purely theological in nature. These will have to depend on the nature of the research question and the logical thought sequence of the research.

Scientific

As a research endeavor, it has to fulfill the requirements of a scientific research in its mode of conduct and content. It needs to have the basic requirements mandated by the Commission on Higher Education pertaining to research activities. Thus the following parts, but not necessarily limited to them, have to be present:

Review of Current Literature and Studies or Theologico-Conceptual Background of the Study

This section situates the research study within the theological spectrum under discussion. It also recognizes the different authors who have worked on the topic or theme under study from diverse perspectives. It initiates both the researcher and the readers into the current theological debate, developments, implications, and thought ramifications relative to the theological issue under study. It identifies the gaps and lacunae needing improvements and amplifications. It also identifies and situates where the present research is to contribute to the body of knowledge under study. Thus, the research review provides the theological background of the research presently undertaken.

Research Question

This is the main focus of the theological paper. By nature it has to be theological. The major theological problem needs to be subdivided into sub-questions, which eventually form the major parts of the theological research question. It is highly recommended that the sub-problems or question, when taken together, are to complete the whole theological paper answering the main research question.

Scope and Delimitation

Theological questions by nature are broad since all branches of theology are in some ways interconnected. Thus, a question of Justification for example, can be researched from biblical, ethical and moral, historical and doctrinal perspectives. Depending therefore on the nature of the research (term paper, thesis or for journal publication), a researcher has to set the scope and delimitations of the study. This will help also the reader to anticipate the expected parameters of the research study.

Methodology

Most branches of theology have their own specific methodology in the conduct of research. Thus, it is highly recommended that the researcher not only select an adviser who is an expert in the field of theology he researches, but most importantly, to consult with the same, in order to determine the appropriate methodology to be applied to the specific research question. This does not preclude the student researcher from taking on a personal study on the various approaches to theological research.

Research Outline and Design

This section sets the general framework of the theological research. It also determines the direction of the research work. In some ways it defines and justifies the choice of the research question, states the hypothesis of the research study and evaluates the data leading to the resolution of the hypothesis, and outlines the sub-topics leading to the research conclusions and outcomes.

Body

This is the major part of the research work. This section discusses the resolution of the sub-problems as well as the main problem of the research study. Care must be taken to follow religiously the RST Manual on Style. The researcher has to take pains to logically and developmentally organize the thought presentation until the main question is adequately resolved. Generally, footnoting is the rule and it has to be a continuous numbering from beginning to end of the research paper. The major division of the body is dependent on the sub-problems of the research work.

Conclusion

Resolution of the research questions has their place in this section. The conclusion may come in various forms depending on applicability and innovativeness of the researcher.

Pastoral relevance

Although the research is theological in nature, by all purposes, it needs to have some pastoral dimensions. For after all, our theological research has to touch base with life, with spiritual life, with social life, with moral life, and with liturgical life. This is a very important dimension of theological research. It has to contribute to the building of a Christian life, holiness, understanding, and deeper appreciation of charismatic gifts.

Advancement of Knowledge

Research is not a simple repetition or restatement of fossilized facts, events and statements of doctrines or dogmas. It has to usher in new perspective, idea, point of view, understanding or knowledge itself. It is to contribute to the resolution to pressing issues and concerns.

Innovative

A Research output is to have a significant contribution to present theological discussions, pastoral concerns, or relevant socio-cultural issue viewed from a theological prism.

Sec. 3. Researcher's Skills and Values

Research demands skills and attitudes from students. These skills and attitudes are to be matched with adequate personal discipline so that a research habit and culture are formed and inculcated in the personal life of the researcher. The following are some important skills and values to develop:

Read, Read and Read

If one is to make a good research one has to develop a love for reading. Consult as many authors as there can be. Digest their thoughts, dialogue with them through their works. When necessary and possible get in touch with them.

Think Critically

Reading is not enough, one is to pose questions with the hope to understand and probe the thought or idea the author is presenting. Critically appraise their contribution to the body of knowledge. Recognize their strengths and weaknesses. State your claim humbly but clearly.

Take Notes

It is always good to jot down notes as the reading progresses. This allows one to be able to recall with much ease the topics and ideas already read.

Follow the RST Manual on Style

This has to become a researchers habit. This manual ought to be the researcher's bible for those writing a research for subject requirements, thesis, or publications.

Write, Edit and Re-Write

A research work is never written ones, much less edited twice only. One is not to get tired of re-writing and re-editing continuously the

work until the research is deemed to give a positive contribution to the particular field of specialization.

Discuss with others

As a student of a theological school, develop the attitude to discuss theological topics of interest and researches not only with your adviser but even with peers.

Be Humble and Patient.

There just are too many ideas and knowledge out there to be discovered. Never assume to have known everything already. It takes a lot of patience to sit down, read, reflect so as to get well informed and be theologically correct and upright.

Be dedicated and determined

These are core values to bring to completion a research work already started. Be dedicated to the chosen topic, theme or issue, be ready to be surprised with new ideas, and, most importantly, manage effectively time allotment for research work.

Love Learning and Be Prayerful

To love learning is the soul of the discovery of knowledge. Stop the desire to learn and one brings to a screeching halt the pursuit of knowledge, truth and wisdom. In the quest to learn and to sustain a love for learning, one needs to keep knees bended in prayer and supplication to stir clear from intellectual lethargy, mental fatigue, and academic boredom.

Be Honest

Avoid plagiarism in all its forms. Recognize the authors whose ideas you have borrowed directly or indirectly.

Article III

General Policies

The research program and endeavour of RST are guided by the following general principles, policies and guidelines:

Sec 1. Research Office (RO)

- The RO in collaboration with the Dean of Studies and the School Board programs the research agenda as well as the research and thesis direction of the institution.
- It assigns panelists based on expertise and schedules appropriate time for defenses (proposal and final).
- Generally, a period of at least two (2) weeks upon submission will the proposal defense be conducted and three to four (3-4) weeks for final thesis defense. However, this may change according to the availability of the Panelists and the adviser.
- The RO secures the presence of the adviser and the panelists during the thesis defense (proposal or final) either virtually or face to face.
- The RO forwards to the registrar the final grade of the research work only upon completion of the necessary post defense requirements.

Sec 2. Schedule for Thesis Proposal and Final Defenses

This scheduling is intended to allow the students to have appropriate amount of time for the Comprehensive Examinations at the end of their third year theological studies.

- Thesis Proposal Defense: by the end of the second semester (2nd Year level),

- Final Thesis Defense: by the end of the first semester or beginning of second semester (3rd Year level),
- Congregational decisions on matters of TPW requirements relayed officially to Dean of Studies of the Director are accepted.

Sec 3. Researcher

- The researcher is to set his own timetable leading towards the completion of the research work. This is to be communicated to the research office for purposes of monitoring and documentation. The researcher together with the research office and the adviser are to collaborate for the completion of the research work as programmed.
- The development of the content of the research is the scope of responsibility primarily of the researcher in collaboration with the adviser.
- It is the responsibility of the researcher to choose his adviser provided that the latter holds the expertise demanded by the research work.
- The researcher is to inform the RO information about the chosen adviser.
- After the final thesis defense and the incorporation of the required corrections, it is the duty of the researcher to have his research work signed by the Adviser and the panelists. Other Administrative signatures may be facilitated by the RO.
- It is the responsibility of the researcher to submit to the RO hardbound copies of his final research output. These copies will be forward forwarded to different offices, e.g., CHed, St. Augustine Library, Office of the Dean and Research Office.

Sec 4. Length of the Research Papers and Grading Qualification

- Thesis is not to be less than 60 pages (excluding Bibliography).
- For both proposal and final defense a grade of 75-79 is considered passed with major revision. It is the responsibility of the researcher to incorporate all addenda and suggestions to make the research work achieve a better passing mark.
- A failing mark in any defense proceeding is to be addressed separately by the RO in collaboration with the adviser and the panel members.

Article IV: Terminal Paper Writing

Sec 1. Preparing the Thesis Proposal Document

In writing a thesis proposal for Recoletos School of Theology as a requirement for MAT degree, students are to take into consideration the guidelines in this article. This section will guide the student not only to finish their work in time but also achieve the standard set by the institution. It will also ensure them to write a unified, coherent, logical sequencing and interconnectedness between and among the various parts of the thesis proposal. The following are some guidelines in the formulation of the thesis proposal.

The Research Topic

- Provides the general idea as to the particular theme understudy.
- Identifies what particular field in theology the study is to be conducted (scripture, dogmatic theology, canon law, pastoral theology or spiritual theology).
- Demonstrates clear parameters of the research topic.
- Short and concise yet comprehensive enough.
- Generally, this is better articulated in the latter part of the preparation of the thesis proposal.

Review of Current Literature (within the last 10 years) or Theological-Conceptual Background of the Study

- A review of the recent studies and literature (i.e. the past 10 years of the topic understudy; [11th to 20th year readings are still possible if there are no or very scarce recent literatures and studies],

- A survey of the thought development of the desired theme for study, A recognition of the various authors and their contribution to the development of the particular theme under study,
- Fifteen to twenty (15-20) literatures (journal and books) to be reviewed, the more the better.
- Purpose:
 - Δ To be familiar with the recent developments of the theme understudy,
 - Δ To know who the various authors and what is their side or take on the said theme, and how did they contribute to the debate at hand,
 - Δ To analyze and describe the various controversies, points of agreements and disagreements, divergence and convergence of ideas, debates and divides of the theme understudy,
 - Δ To identify the related themes and their relationships,
 - Δ To find gaps or lacuna in order to determine where one can possibly make the necessary contribution to the body of knowledge,
 - Δ To provide the theological backdrop or background of the research study,
 - Δ To situate the thesis question as well as its development under study.

Thesis Question(s)

- Drawn from the review of the current studies or the review of related literature,
- The particular area of the debate or a recognized lacuna where one can make the possible contribution to the body of knowledge,
- Thesis of the study cast into a question form,
- Made up of one Major Thesis Question and broken down into 3-5 sub-questions.
- The 3-5 sub-questions are related to each other and that their development will lead to the resolution of the thesis question.

Thesis Structure

- The projected outline of the research work based on the thesis questions,

- A more detailed treatment of the 3-5 sub-thesis questions,
- Each sub-question is to be broken down into 3 to 5 sub-topics,
- Each sub-topic is to expand, develop, and explain the sub-thesis question,
- The development of such sub-topics resolves the major thesis question,
- Allows the panelists and adviser to see and understand the general direction of the research work.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

- Scope of the study is an articulation in broad strokes what would be included in the development of the research and the resolution of the thesis question or what would be the focus of the study. The Research structure helps identify the scope of the study.
- Delimitation of the study refers to the related topics or corollaries which will not be dealt with by the research project. Delimitation identifies the probable related topics but not considered. These related but not treated topics may, after the study, be suggested or recommended for future research endeavors.

Significance of the Study

- The contribution of the research work to the growing body of knowledge,
- A filling up of an identified lacuna or gap discovered after the review of related and current literature,
- An answer to a particular question needing attention and debate needing resolution,
- To which side of the debate the study contributes,
- Ways in which the new research study affect or contribute to church's engagements, civil society's concerns, congregational debates and the researcher's theological growth.

Methodology

- Every theology department follows or has its own theological methodology.

- It is wise to consult the adviser (a theologian with expertise in particular field of study) for an advice as to the methodology to be used in the study or for every research question.
- One can also observe from the various literature review, the ramified theological methodologies applied by the different authors.
- In general terms methodology refers to the scientific means by which the researcher will use to resolve the thesis question.
- Depending on the nature of the research sub-questions, methodology is to be identified for every sub-question.

Definition of Terms

- An operational definition of the important and dominant terminologies that will be used in the study,
- Terms and vocabularies related to the theological research,
- As the study progresses, important terminologies increase.

Bibliography

- A list of resources (books, journals, serials) that would be used in the study,
- A list of resources not only for the proposal defense but for the whole research work,
- Arranged and segregated according to Primary Sources, Secondary Sources,
- Categorization of resources within the first division of Primary and Secondary Resources,
- Alphabetically arranged.

Sec 2. Application for and Conduct of the Thesis Proposal Defense

Application for Thesis Proposal Defense

Once the thesis proposal document is completed according to the standards and guidelines stated above, the theology student prepares for the submission and the eventual thesis defense of his research work. The following is the procedure to be done leading to the thesis proposal defense:

- Download the form “Major Paper and Thesis Proposal Submission Form” from the institution’s website (www.rst.edu.ph/research-forms/).
- Fills-out the form including the Thesis Adviser’s Signature. The signature of the adviser, in the research form, indicates the latter’s approval to have the thesis proposal submitted for defense.
- Submits to the Research Office the thesis Proposal document containing the following:
 - Δ Research Title,
 - Δ Theologico-conceptual Background of the Study or Review of Current Related Literature,
 - Δ The Statement of the Research Problem,
 - Δ Thesis Structure,
 - Δ Scope and Delimitations of the Study,
 - Δ Significance of the Study,
 - Δ The Methodology,
 - Δ Definition of Terms,
 - Δ Bibliography.
- Submit the “thesis proposal submission form” and the thesis proposal document to the Research office.
- Provide four copies of the thesis proposal document. This will be distributed to the members of the panel who will read and critique the research proposal.
- Submit to the Research Office via quaerens@sscr.mnl.edu.ph digital copy of the Research proposal both in pdf and word format. The document will be subjected to authenticity validation—Turnitin. (Signs of plagiarism will be dealt with according to the norms and standards of the institution. This may merit disqualification from the MAT program, change of research topic or a re-writing of the thesis proposal).

Creation of Thesis Proposal Panel

It is the obligation of the Research Office, upon the acceptance of the submitted documents for thesis proposal, to perform the following:

- Create a panel of experts to investigate and critique the research proposal,
- Schedule the conduct of the proposal defense not more than one month after the submission of the proposal document,
- Determine the nature of the conduct of the proposal defense (online, face-to-face or mixed or other form) depending of the circumstances of the time and the availability of the expert panelists,
- Inform all parties ahead of time as to the scheduled thesis proposal defense,
- Post and calendar the proposal defense via appropriate online platform and send invites via the same online platform,
- Post in the bulletin board the proposal defense schedule and other pertinent information,
- Send to the panel members hardcopy or ecopy, depending on the nature of the conduct of the thesis proposal defense and the desire of the panelists, the following documents:
 - Δ Copy of the thesis proposal,
 - Δ Evaluation form for thesis proposal defense,
 - Δ Grading sheet for the proposal defense.

Conduct of the Thesis Proposal Defense

The conduct of the thesis proposal defence will have the following parts:

- Opening Prayer to be led by the Researcher,
- Introduction by the Research Defense Moderator to introduce among others the following:
 - Δ Members of the panel,
 - Δ Adviser,
 - Δ Researcher and his topic,
 - Δ Mechanics of the Thesis Proposal Defense,
 - Δ The grading system,
- Presentation of the Research Proposal (not more than 15 minutes),
- Interpellation by the panel members to enhance, improve, suggest innovative slants and specific areas of theological interests. The

conduct of the interpellation may come in any form as determined by the Moderator (section-by-section examination by all panelists or a fifteen-minute interpellation by each panelist. There can be two or three rounds of the fifteen-minute interpellation as needed).

- Approval of the Thesis Proposal
 - Δ Thesis Proposal will be graded according to set criteria. A passing grade for a thesis proposal is 80.
 - Δ Thesis proposals adjudged as “failed”, will be given back to the researcher for completion; major intervention of the panel members have to be incorporated. Unless necessary and determined by the Panel members, no second thesis proposal defense is to be conducted.
 - Δ A successful thesis proposal defence allows the researcher to pursue his research studies and entitles him for the final defence. He is to regularly consult his adviser so that he is able to finish his research as scheduled.

Sec 3. Evaluation and Grading of the Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal will be evaluated according to set criteria (Research Scientific and Relevance criteria) with specific set points. To determine the appropriate grade a formula for computation will be used.

Grading Criteria:

Max Points	Research Scientific Criteria (70 %)	Points Gained
10	Appropriate Research Topic	
20	Valid Theological-Conceptual Background of the Study or Review of Current Literature	
10	Significant Research Question	
10	Comprehensive Thesis Structure	
10	Well-defined Scope and Delimitations of the Study	
10	Clear Significance of the Study	
10	Appropriate Methodology	

10	Faithful to RST Research Manuals	
10	Grammar and Syntax	
100 pts	Total	
	(.70)	

Max Points	Research Relevance Criteria (30 %)	Points Gained
20	Theological	
20	Pastoral	
20	Innovative	
20	Advances Theological Knowledge	
20	Contributes to the Body of Knowledge	
100 pts	Total	
	(.30)	

Grade Computation

Panelist’s and Adviser’s Grade

$$[(RSC) (.70)] + [(RRC) (.30)] = PG/AG$$

Where:

RSC - Research Scientific Criteria

RRC - Research Relevance Criteria

PG - Panelist’s Grade

AG - Adviser’s Grade

Thesis Proposal Grade

$$PG + PG + PG + AG / 4 = \text{Thesis Proposal Grade}$$

Rating Matrix

96 - 100%	(1.00)	Excellent
94 - 95%	(1.25)	Very Good
92 - 93%	(1.50)	Very Good
89 - 91%	(1.75)	Good
87 - 88%	(2.00)	Good
84 - 86%	(2.25)	Good
82 - 83%	(2.50)	Fair
79 - 81%	(2.75)	Fair
75 - 78%	(3.00)	Passing
70%	(5.00)	Failed

Sec 4. Thesis Writing Completion

Having successfully passed the thesis proposal defense, the researcher is to pursue his research study so as to achieve the MAT degree. He is reminded of the following guidelines:

- Regularly consult his adviser,
- Follow the RST Manual on Style,
- Consult the Research Office concerning the progress of his research study,
- If and when the research work is not finished on time, consult the Research Office for some guidelines,
- No research work is to be submitted for final defense unless it is reviewed by the Research Assistant Team (RAT) and given a go signal by the Research Adviser.

Sec 5. Preparation and Submission of the Thesis Document for Final Submission

Final Phase Prior to Submission of the thesis Document for Thesis Defense

As final phase of the research work, the researcher is to perform the following tasks:

- Submit the research work to the Adviser for approval for thesis defense. It could be possible that the adviser would still suggest some revision and addition of some pertinent data. The researcher ought not to think of this as a delaying tactic of the adviser. Rather, he must be able to see the point of the adviser and seek for guidance for the completion of the research task.
- Submit the research work to an English Editor to polish grammar and syntax of the research work.
- Review research format based on the RST Manual on Style. Or consult his Research Assistant Team (RAT).
- Submit to Research Office a pdf format of the research work for research authenticity validation (Turnitin). (Plagiarism is not only an intellectual dishonesty but a crime. Thus, plagiarized research submitted will be dealt with according to the strict standards of academic and religious institutions. Punishment could range from permanent disqualification from the MAT program, change of topic, or re-writing the whole thesis. This will be adjudicated by the RST academic council.)
- Once the Research Office clears the research work from signs of plagiarism, only then can the researcher prepare for the submission of the research work for final defense.

Submission of the Thesis Document for Final Defense

- Secure the approval of your thesis adviser to subject your research paper for final defense.
 - Δ Download the document “Final Thesis Defense Submission Form” from the institution’s website: [http://www.rst.edu.ph / research-forms](http://www.rst.edu.ph/research-forms),
 - Δ Fill-out the form,
 - Δ As to the signature of your adviser, the researcher may secure his digital signature with permission,
- Submit to quaerens@sscrmn.edu.ph the following:
 - Δ Thesis (final defense format) in pdf or in word format
 - Δ Final Defense Submission Form
 - Δ Provide the Research office four copies (bounded copies) for distribution to panelists.

Setting the Schedule for Final Thesis Defense

It is the obligation of the research office to set the schedule for the final thesis defense. It is preferred that the panelists of the proposal defense be the same panel for the final defense. However, it is the discretion of the Research Office to determine substitute panelists in the event that one or two of the originals could not be available.

The Research Office forwards these copies to the assigned panelists for initial comments. At least, one of the three panelists (or the chairman) is to give a positive approval for the research so it can be calendared for final defense. Any panelist that has a valid objection to the research paper will be consulted and asked for a written opinion, prior to the scheduling of the final defense. It will be given back to the researcher for consideration and revision.

With the consent of the panelist as well as the adviser, the Research office schedules the final defense not more than three weeks after the final submission of the paper.

Sec 6. Conduct of the Final Thesis Defense

The final thesis defense is an academic activity. It is the culmination of the formal theological training of the candidate to the degree Master of Arts in Theology with civil recognition. The final defense conduct is to proceed as follows:

- Prayer lead by the Researcher,
- Opening Remarks by the Research Moderator to introduce, among others the following the following: Research Topic, Researcher, Advisers, as well as other technical professionals, Mechanics of the Final Defense and Grading System,
- Presentation of the Research Paper. It is preferable that the paper is not read, but is delivered as though giving a formal research seminar to the invited participants and guests of the research forum. The thesis presentation is not to exceed thirty (30) minutes.
- Interpellation by the Panel members: (The researcher is to take notes of the important addenda and interpellations coming from the panelists; for these are to form part of the revisions in view of the final out-put of the research).

- Interpellations from the audience. When the panelists have exhausted their questions, the audience may be given a chance to ask questions addressed to the researcher. The researcher is to answer queries posted by the auditors.
- The Panelist are to fill out the Rating Form on the conduct of the Research proceeding (cf. Thesis Final Defense Rating Form).
- After the exposition and the interpellation stages of the final thesis defense, Research Director together with the panelists move to a different room to deliberate on the outcome and final grade of the research paper and the conduct of the research proceeding or the researcher.
- The grade of the research work will be announced by the Research Moderator after the full computation is done.
- Announcement of the Mark. This is not obligatory depending on the decision of the panel with the consent of the Adviser, and the Research Moderator. If the exact mark is not announced, a mere word of “passed” or “failed” may be indicated.
 - Δ A grade of 75-78 (3.00) is considered passed with major revisions. The researcher is to perform the following:
 - Incorporate all suggestions, revisions, and corrections done by the panelists,
 - Submit, at a time determined by the panelists, a final copy (revised) to be graded by the Panelists,
 - The second rating by the panelists is the final grade to be recorded in the TOR of the researcher.
 - Δ A grade of failure will be addressed on a case to case basis.
- Final Words: The Thesis Adviser, The Research Director,
- The Final Prayer to be led by the Researcher.

In cases of emergency, like pandemic where public defense is prohibited, other forms of thesis defense may be resorted to e.g. Online (or virtual) Thesis Defense or Non Public Research Evaluation by the Panelists or any combination of the above. This is to be determined by the Research Office in coordination with the Director or Dean of Studies.

Sec 7. Evaluation and Grading of the Final Thesis Output and Defense

Criteria for the Evaluation of the Thesis and

Assigned Points	Research Scientific Criteria (RSC) [.70 %]	Gained Points
PART I		
10 pts	Appropriate Research Topic	
	Valid Theological-Conceptual Background of the Study or Review of Current Literature	
	Significant Research Question	
	Comprehensive Thesis Structure	
	Well-defined Scope and Delimitations of the Study	
	Clear Significance of the Study	
	Appropriate Methodology	
Part II		
15 pts	Thorough, extensive research on the thesis question(s),	
15 pts	Use of relevant and appropriate resources in the development of the various sub-topics,	
10 pts	Organized, logical, and developmental presentation of thought	
10 pts	Proficiency in the use language and expression	
10 pts	Due recognition of authorities	
10 pts	Significant personal contribution to the resolution of the research questions	
10 pts	Fidelity to RST Manual on Style	
Part III		
10 pts	Significant conclusion and recommendations drawn out from the study	
100 pts	TOTAL	
	(.70)	

Max Points	Research Relevance Criteria (30 %)	Points Gained
20	Theological	
20	Pastoral	
20	Innovative	
20	Advances Theological Knowledge	
20	Contributes to the Body of Knowledge	
100 pts	Total	
	(.30)	

Final Thesis Grade Computation

$$[(RSC) (.70)] + [(CRD) (.30)] = PG/AG$$

Where:

- RSC = Research Scientific Criteria
- RRC = Research Relevance Criteria
- PG = Panelist Grade
- AG = Adviser’s Grade
- FTG = Final Thesis Grade

$$PG1 + PG2 + PG 3 + AG / 4 = \text{Final Thesis Grade}$$

Rating Matrix

96 - 100%	(1.00)	Excellent
94 - 95%	(1.25)	Very Good
92 - 93%	(1.50)	Very Good
89 - 91%	(1.75)	Good
87 - 88%	(2.00)	Good
84 - 86%	(2.25)	Good

82 - 83%	(2.50)	Fair
79 - 81%	(2.75)	Fair
75 - 78%	(3.00)	Passing
70%	(5.00)	Failed

Sec. 8 Post Defense Requirements

After the conduct of the final thesis defense, the researcher is to perform the following obligations:

- Incorporate all corrections, suggestions, addenda and revisions made by the panelist during the final thesis defense,
- Submit the thesis for editing by a language editor,
- Prepare the necessary introductory page requirements of the thesis and have these signed by the proper signatories,
 - Δ Title Page (use official RST Header),
 - Δ Endorsement Sheet (with RST official Header); SIGNED BY: Adviser, Terminal Paper Writing Supervisor, Dean of Studies, Rector;
 - Δ Approval Sheet; SIGNED BY: Panel of Examinees: Chairman, Member, Dean of Studies and Rector,
 - Δ All these documents are downloadable from www.rst.edu.ph the researcher is to visit the institution's website,
- Have the Endorsement and Approval sheets signed by the corresponding signatories (as to the signature of the Administrative Officers, the RO can facilitate).
- Produce four (4) hardbound copies to be submitted to the Research, Planning and Development Office,
- Submit also a digital file of the thesis (both in word and pdf formats). The digital copy is to be submitted in a single file (all parts incorporated into one single file). This digital file is to be submitted in a CD format and emailed to rst.research@rst.edu.ph or quaerens@sscrmnl.edu.ph (the CD will be forwarded to the Registrar's Office for submission to CHED).

The releasing of final thesis to the Registrar's office will only be made upon the submission of the final thesis document to the Research Office.

Final and completed research work is expected to be submitted within one (1) month after the conduct of the final thesis defense.

Article V

Course Term Papers

RST, responding to the demands of VG 39b on the importance of engaging in scientific research, has implemented in the delivery of basic theological studies a notable time and opportunity for research works. Thus, all major courses with three (3) units or five (5) CTS are divided into the following class delivery conduct (2) units or (3) CTS for classroom or contact lessons and (1) unit or (1.5) CTS) for research work.

This research work to be submitted at the end of the semester or as the professor of each class so desires, forms part of the student evaluation. This research output comprises 30 % of the student's final grade in that particular course or subject.

Sec 1. Process and Procedure for Term Paper Writing

In writing the course term papers, students may follow the succeeding process and procedure to facilitate apt, quality, and timely submission of research works:

- Choose a particular theme within the course outline presented by the Professor or refer to the Prospectus of RST.
- Consult with the professor relative to the intended theme to be developed (seek his approval)
- Create a bibliographical listing of the desired and approved theme,
 - Δ have a good number of related resources not less than 20 journals and books, the more the better (see. Manual on Style, 25 ff),
 - Δ Prefer the more recent resources (the last 10 years).

- Make a review of the resources at hand (book or article)
 - Δ Outline the various sub-themes that have developed with the last 10 years of that particular theme to be researched,
 - Δ Use the theme-based in making the review not the author-based review.
- Identify or delimit the topic for research since term papers are limited to 10-15 pages only.
- Outline the main themes and sub-themes so these will serve as guide in the development of the research work,
 - Δ Make sure that the outline allows your readers and bird's eye view of the research work,
 - Δ Do not forget to include the pastoral application of your research work,
- Complete and submit the research work on time.

Sec 2. Term Paper Format and Style

Title Page: To be downloaded from the RST website www.rst.edu.ph

Abstract: 200-250 words or two-paragraph summary or outline of the major points of the research work. This is to make the reader get the gist and have a mental outline of the research work and be able to follow through in the details as one reads the research work. (see Manual on Style, 16).

Heading Styles: Consult RST Manual on Style

Font Style & Size: Times New Roman 12

Length: 15-20 pages (1.5 or double spaced)

Sec 3. Term Paper Evaluation

Professors may adopt the following in the evaluation of the research work submitted by the students as one of the requirements for the course.

Max. Points	Variables	Points Gained
20	Theologically Updated	
20	Pastorally valid	
20	Relevant	
20	Progressive and Balanced Though Development	
10	Grammar and Syntax	
10	Follows the RST Manual on Style	
100	Total	

Article VI

Publications

Quaerens

A Theologico-Pastoral Journal of the Recoletos School of Theology that publishes the researches and contributions to theological debates, updates and innovations of the faculty members and researchers of the Recoletos School of Theology and members of the Community of Recoletos Formation Center and other avid researchers.

Restless Heart

A Student publication of the Recoletos School of Theology.

BîNAH

A collection of all the abstracts of published researches by RST and RFC. This is published every five years.

Updates

The official newsletter of RFC published every semester

Observer

The Official newsletter of the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno of the Order of the Augustinian Recollects

Recollect Series

A Collection of articles and researches about the Order of the Augustinian Recollects and the Province of St. Ezekiel Moreno's History, Legacy, Culture and various Contributions to culture and nation building.

[1] National Higher Education Research Agenda (NHERA) 2

- Improve research capability of HEIs, particularly the Philippine universities whose main business is to generate knowledge towards international competitiveness;
- Enhance research productivity of HEIs in distinctive areas of competence;
- Generate knowledge/technologies needed for:
 - International, national and regional higher education development,
 - Policy/plan formulation, particularly for higher education,
 - Developing innovative programs in cutting edge higher education fields (e.g. nanotechnology, biotechnology, information and communications technology, and materials science); and
 - Advancing the frontiers of knowledge in the disciplines; and
 - Promote and facilitate dissemination and utilization of research outputs.

[2] Cover Page Format

TITLE (ALL CAPS)

A Thesis/Thesis Proposal Submitted
to the Graduate Program
of the Recoletos School of Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts in Theology
Major in _____

Name: _____
Quezon City, Philippines
-Year-

[3] Endorsement Sheet

We have read the manuscript entitled “[**BOLD CAPITALIZED TITLE OF THE RESEARCH WORK**]” submitted by **NAME OF THE RESEARCHER**, and affirm that the same complies with the standards of the Recoletos School of Theology for the degree Master of Art in Theology (MAT) major in _____.

In view thereof, the undersigned endorse the said thesis for oral defense and be scheduled on **Date of the Final Defense**.

Thank you very much!

Name _____
Adviser

Name _____
Terminal Paper Writing Supervisor

Approved by,

Name _____
Dean of Studies

Name _____
Rector

[4] Approval Sheet

The thesis entitled “**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH WORK**” submitted and prepared by **NAME OF THE RESEARCHER**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master of Arts in Theology (MAT) major in _____, has been examined and is recommended for acceptance and approval for Oral Defense.

Name of the Adviser
Adviser

PANEL OF EXAMINEES

Approved by the Committee on Oral Examination with the grade of _____.

Name _____
Chairman

Name _____
Member

Accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Theology (MAT) major in _____.

Name _____
Dean of Studies

Name _____
Rector

[5] Major Paper and Thesis Proposal Submission Form

Date:
Name:
Congregation or Diocese:

Contact Details:
email add.
Mobile Phone no.

Nature of Research:

Major Term Paper

Thesis

Title of Research:

Adviser: (Name and Signature)

Research Time Table:

Research out-put	Week 1 - 2	Week 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6	Week 7 - 8	Week 9 - 10	Week 11-12	Week 13-14	Week 15-16
Intro								
Body								
Conclusion								
Revision								
Final Form								

Date of Thesis Defense: _____

This document is to be attached as supplementary document together with the Thesis Proposal including the Bibliographical Entries and submitted to the Research Office.

Researcher's Signature

Research Director's Signature

[6] Thesis Final Defense Submission Form

Date:

Name:

Congregation or Diocese:

Contact Details:

email add.

Mobile Phone no.

Nature of Research:

Major Term Paper

Thesis

Topic:

Adviser:

Name and Signature: _____

N.B. To be attached are five (5) hard copies of the research work for distribution to the panelists or readers.

 Signature of Researcher

Panelists: _____

Date of Defense: _____

 Research Director's Signature

[7] Term Paper Cover Page

---RESEARCH TITLE ---

Font Style and Size:

Times New Roman 20
Bold & CAPITALIZED

A Term Paper
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Course _____

Font Style and Size:

Times New Roman 15
Regular

Name
Date of Submission



Research, Publication, Planning and Development Office