



***Master of Theological Studies –  
Urban Community Development stream***

***Wycliffe College, Toronto School of Theology***

## Summative Exercise Guidelines

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### Summary

The 2-credit Summative Exercise (SE) in the Urban Community Development stream of Wycliffe College's Master of Theological Studies program allows students to choose from four options: an integrative paper, a field research project, an organizational project, and a research thesis. This SE in the MTS development stream is similar to the SE in the non-stream MTS program, with the exception of its particular focus on issues of importance to community development.

- The MTS-D SE integration paper reports on a significant project of interdisciplinary academic research in the combined fields of theology and urban community development.
- The MTS-D SE extended research paper is a thesis-style investigation of a specific community development research question. Students can demonstrate here their capacity for further advanced research degree studies.
- The MTS-D SE may also be designed specifically as a collaboration with a community organization to design a process or produce a tool or product.
- The MTS-D SE can also focus on primary, community-based research, as a piece of field-based research conducted in agreement with the supervisor, and as appropriate according to the research ethics standards set by TST and the University of Toronto.

### Summative Exercise Options

Students at the end of the MTS-D program meet their final requirements by first choosing between the options allowed for the two-credit summative exercise (only the general, non-stream MTS also includes the option of a 3-credit thesis). These options are adapted to the MTS-D fields of theology and development. Careful reflection and consideration by students is suggested in order to discern the best suitability among these options, keeping in mind the community and contexts in which they live and work, their own academic, personal and professional capacities, and their intended vocational direction. Four options are listed here, with more details and guidelines below.

- A. An integration paper
- B. An organizational or professional process, tool or product
- C. A field-based project

- D. An extended research paper or thesis

## Scope of Work

During the two-credit MTS-D summative exercise, the assumption is that the student's total investment of time should approximate at least twice the work of a regular term single-credit course. TST classroom-based courses normally expect 2-3 hours of non-classroom work for each hour of classroom time, hence a total investment of 75-100 hours per single-credit course. The two-credit MTS-D summative exercise therefore assumes investment by the student of at least 150-200 hours. Where the output of the summative exercise is a paper or thesis, it should be approximately 40 pages (10,000 words) long. In the case of an alternative output, such as a professional organizational product or a field-based research project, prior discussion and agreement with the supervisor is recommended at the proposal stage on a clear definition of the scope of work and outputs required.

## General principles

*Note: The following principles apply to all MTS-D summative exercise options. Where a particular option has different requirements, those will be noted in the descriptions to follow.*

- 1) Early in the final 12-month period in which you plan to graduate, if not sooner, you should decide which summative exercise option you wish to pursue, your topic, your research question, and a suitable supervisor. During the term prior to the actual term of SE work, you should initiate discussion with your proposed supervisor, and be working on your proposal (see below).
- 2) Begin to identify your SE topic as early as practical in your MTS-D program, so that you can:
  - Choose courses with appropriate subject matter
  - Take a course with your intended supervisor
  - Develop course projects and papers that help prepare you for your SE.In the case of the MTS-D thesis option, this is particularly important, especially if you are thinking of it as preparation for an advanced research program like the PhD.
- 3) Guidelines about your Summative Exercise supervisor:
  - Check with your academic advisor (i.e., David Kupp) for advice and guidance on choosing a supervisor for your SE.
  - In most cases the supervisor will be a member of the Wycliffe core or adjunct faculty.
  - If there are weighty reasons (e.g., specialist expertise) for asking a person outside Wycliffe or TST to serve as the supervisor, the student must first obtain the permission of his or her Wycliffe academic advisor and the Director of Basic Degree studies.
  - In most cases students will seek to work with a supervisor with whom they have already taken a course, in order to clarify working compatibility and potential topics.

- The student is entirely responsible for the SE project or paper, and the role of the faculty supervisor is to offer guidance and comment. However, it is unwise for the student to embark in a direction against the advice of the faculty supervisor.
  - Should you, in the course of research, think it advisable to change your topic or the direction of the SE, you should first consult with your supervisor.
  - If either of you feels the need to change supervisor during the course of the thesis, this should be discussed with your MTS academic advisor or the Basic Degree Director.
- 4) With the guidance of your SE supervisor, fill out a “Summative Exercise/Thesis Registration” form, available on the website under “Forms & Documents” or from the Registrar’s Office. It will be counter-signed by the supervisor and the Registrar. A TST course designator will be assigned, and the course title will include the phrase “MTS-D Summative Exercise”.
- 5) Near the end of your MTS-D program (e.g., in the second-last term for full-time students), with the guidance of your SE supervisor, prepare a formal written proposal for the SE, including:
- a statement of the topic
  - a research question or thesis statement (if appropriate)
  - a rationale
  - a set of intended learning outcomes
  - a description of the output, with an outline of the SE
  - a work plan, with milestones and dates
  - a description of methodology and an initial bibliography (an initial meeting with the librarian is recommended).
- This proposal should be three-five pages long (see further details below).
- 6) The proposal will either be approved by the supervisor (sometimes with suggestions), or returned for changes. As appropriate a proposal may be revised and re-submitted.
- 7) You are free to proceed with work on the SE before receiving notification as to whether the proposal has been approved, but you assume the risk that the supervisor will direct changes in the proposal.
- 8) Agree a schedule of delivery dates with your SE supervisor for a draft and final version of the SE, until the SE is ready for submission. The supervisor may direct you to specific sources, and make suggestions as to method, content, and style. At the same time, a high degree of independent work is assumed.
- 9) The completed SE should normally be submitted to the supervisor four weeks before grades are due at TST. (This date can be ascertained from the TST website.) However, a later date may be negotiated with the supervisor.
- 10) For most MTS-D SE’s the supervisor is the only reader and examiner.
- 11) The supervisor will provide written comments and a grade; the latter will then be submitted to the Registrar.

12) Normally, the SE will be completed during the final term prior to graduation. However, if an extension is necessary, this will be negotiated with the supervisor and the student. The student must complete an SDF form (available from the Registrar's office) in order to have the extension approved.

13) Style and format:

- Written assignments will follow the style and format guidelines provided by the Univ. of Toronto (as set out in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition, and its student version, Turabian's *Manual for Writers*). See [https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). Include complete documentation (either footnotes or endnotes) for all published material used. Cite directly all sources relied on, whether quoted directly, paraphrased or summarized.
- Terms relating to sex and gender will follow the TST writing guidelines, which refer to chapter 14: "Elimination of Stereotyping in Written Communication" in *The Canadian Style: Guide to Writing and Editing* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2008) for a helpful guide to the avoidance of stereotyping on sexual, racial or ethnic grounds and to the "fair and representative depiction of people with disabilities." See also the guidelines for unbiased language on the University website (<https://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/revising/unbiased-language/>). TST supports the policy of inclusive language and urges the use of inclusive language in all academic assignments.
- The SE must be written in proper English academic style and must be free of mistakes in grammar, syntax, spelling, and typography.
- The SE must be submitted electronically in MS Word or .pdf format, in a 12-point font, with normal 1-inch margins. It should be left justified. Pages should be numbered. A complete title page should be supplied, including full name, date and project title.

14) Academic integrity & Plagiarism.

- New readings: The readings undertaken for the SE must be from materials that are new to the student. New material is material students have not read prior to the SE. The exception here is for the Integration option, where students are assessing and analyzing readings undertaken previously during their MTS-D program.
- New work: The work submitted for this SE must be new material. New material is material students have not submitted in whole or in part for any assignment prior to this SE, at any time during or prior to the MTS-D program. If students want to build on portion of their previous work, they must negotiate this with the supervisor at the proposal stage, so that their submitted SE is new in substance and intent.
- Students submitting written material are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics.
- An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook*

(<http://www.tst.edu/handbooks>) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*:

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>. Students are assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges:  
<https://wycliffecollege.ca/sites/default/files/STS5%20%282%29.pdf>

- Normally, students will be required to submit their papers to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their papers to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.
- Other academic offences: TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*  
<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

## A) Integration Paper

### Background and purpose

Students choosing this option will develop a significant paper on an interdisciplinary research question that engages both theology and urban community development, producing an essay of approximately 40 pages. The integration paper is an opportunity to make use of the knowledge, skills and practise of the theological and development disciplines in a connected way, to the extent that you have learned these skills through the MTS-D coursework and internship/ELM. This is what makes it a “summative exercise”. Interdisciplinary research, analysis and writing often requires more resources, time, effort and imagination than single sector research, but the rewards can be considerable.

### Specific guidelines

1. The integration paper addresses a topic of importance within the knowledge, practice and skills of both theology and urban community development. Identification of the specific topic and a focused research question is critical, given the enormous breadth possible in both fields of theology (including bible, theology, history and pastoral studies) and urban community development studies (humanitarian aid, sustainable development, advocacy, justice, peace, etc).
2. Interdisciplinary SE projects may require an additional and more intentional ‘discovery’ phase at the beginning, in order to test whether a proposed research question ‘fits’ well across the boundaries of the disciplines under examination. During this discovery phase the student can also conduct a preliminary review to prove whether sufficient secondary scholarly literature exists for the research as proposed.
3. Students may find that good interdisciplinary research requires a higher tolerance for ambiguity than single-sector research. This requires an open mind for different worldviews

between disciplines, an ability to bridge the gaps between theology, theory and practice, and flexibility, adaptability and curiosity.

4. The written proposal, to be submitted before or early (within weeks 2-3) in the SE semester of study, should include the following information:

- The topic of the paper, together with its rationale, importance and implications. A specific title should be proposed.
- The focused research question or thesis to be addressed, must be detailed and explained. A research question or thesis states concisely the particular point to be proven.
- A statement of the intended learning outcomes for you and readers, and the broader relevance of your research question.
- An indication of what each of the disciplines you have chosen to employ will contribute to your examination and understanding of this interdisciplinary research question. Choose from among the main disciplines in the field of theological studies:
  - i. Biblical – Old and New Testaments
  - ii. theological – including dogmatic theology, systematic theology, historical theology, philosophical theology, and theological ethics
  - iii. contemporary theologies – liberation, contextual, ecological, black, feminist theologies
  - iv. pastoral – ministry, liturgics, homiletics, pastoral counselling, and evangelism.And choose from among the major disciplines in the field of development studies, for example:

- i. urban studies – planning, poverty and development, urban patterns and place
- ii. social justice – racism, gender, decolonization, hospitality
- iii. development economics – wealth and poverty, inequality, food security
- iii. peace and conflict – war, migration, VAWC
- v. sustainability – ecology, land, stewardship, SDGs
- vi. exercise of power – governance, structures, x-sector partnering

While the major fields of theology and development must be represented, and some disciplines within them, it will be unwise and indeed impossible to try to represent every discipline.

- An outline of the paper's organization, and a description of the output. This may take the form of an analytical table of contents, with rationale.
- A description of the methodology.
- A substantive bibliography. By the time the proposal is submitted, you should already be aware of most of the relevant materials, although the bibliography in the proposal will be further developed by the actual research, analysis and writing of the integration paper itself.
- The proposal is usually three-four pages in length, plus bibliography.

5. In addition to examples you have already been exposed to in your MTS-D coursework – and may want to review, your supervisor may want to suggest to you some contemporary and global models of integrative research and writing in the disciplines of theology and development. In addition to core texts and materials from previous courses, other examples might include *Laudato Si'* from Pope Francis, writings by several liberation theologians, Yoder, Redekop, Jantzi's *Development to a Different Drummer*, etc.

6. The integration paper is expected to exercise your capacities to engage the disciplines and methods of both modern theological interpretation and community development's social-scientific foundations. In that sense, the paper might not be required to meet the standard of proof expected solely of a social-scientific, evidence-based, research hypothesis. By its very interdisciplinary nature, the combination of normally disparate disciplines may require some postulation, given the distinct methodological natures of the worlds of scholarly literature behind each. For example, an examination of the theologies and practices of Ugandan churches deeply involved in the HIV-AIDS issue may not achieve publication in public health journals, but may reveal theological and development dimensions of the issue worthy of analysis and delivery of good practice.

## B) Organizational or Professional process, product or tool

### Background and purpose

This version of the MTS-D summative exercise provides students with an opportunity to develop a substantial and tangible process, product or learning tool that meets a strategic need within an immediate and specific context – for a community network, a local agency, a non-profit, an NGO, a church or teaching environment. Some examples would include:

- a training curriculum
- an organizational strategy
- a denominational theology
- a municipal policy
- a learning event design.

These or other immediate gaps within a student's community, place of internship or employment, NGO, church or denomination can provide opportunities to develop suitable summative exercises for the MTS-D.

Like other summative exercise options, this approach requires a proposal that incorporates the common elements noted above. In addition the proposal must address the rationale, setting and outputs from the particular standpoint of the chosen approach.

The prerequisites assumed for this project include students having a working understanding of adult education pedagogies, participatory research and design methods. As appropriate they may also need close familiarity with the approaches, tools and practices of Community-Based Research.

### Specific guidelines

1. As an applied approach to the summative exercise, the threshold of suitability must first be addressed by the student, their academic advisor and the Basic Degree director. In order to register for this version of the MTS-D summative exercise, students must first seek approval in principle, demonstrating the suitability of their intended project, their partner organization, their own skill sets and professional capacities, and the intended timeline of the summative

exercise. For example, in the case of a student intending to develop a training curriculum, the prerequisite course “Art of Facilitation and Workshop Design” or equivalent is required.

2. A summative exercise designed as an organizational product may require an additional and more intentional ‘discovery’ phase at the beginning, in order to test its viability, and its genuine rootedness in community organizations, and to conduct a dialogue with stakeholders in the intended output and its implementation. I.e., a summative exercise should not be ‘imposed’ on the organization in question; good community-driven development practices must be followed. This should be a locally ‘demand-driven’ process, product or tool, not ‘supply-driven’.

3. In contrast to a paper or thesis, an applied or professional summative exercise requires additional elements to be addressed, depending on the project. These might include:

- learning pedagogies and approaches
- examination of organizational environments and drivers
- implementation plans
- literature searches for each significant project element, e.g., theologies, values and worldviews of the organization(s) in question, project subject and sector content.

4. Once approval in principle has been reached, the viability of the project should be demonstrated in the written proposal, to be submitted before or early in the SE semester of study. It should include the following information:

- The theme and content of the project, together with its rationale, importance and implications. A specific title should be proposed.
- The focused research question or thesis to be addressed, must be detailed and explained. A research question or thesis states concisely the particular point to be proven.
- A statement of the intended learning outcomes for you, the stakeholders and the participants.
- A summary of answers to the 8-step Dialogical Learning planning framework.
- A situating of the content of the project within the disciplines of the MTS-D program, with a rationale of choices made. Identify from among the main theological disciplines, for example:

- i. Biblical – Old and New Testaments
- ii. theological – including dogmatic theology, systematic theology, historical theology, philosophical theology, and theological ethics
- iii. historical and modern theologies – black, feminist and liberation theologies
- iv. pastoral – ministry, liturgics, homiletics, pastoral counselling, and evangelism.

And identify from among the major disciplines of development studies, for example:

- i. urban studies – planning, poverty and development, urban patterns and place
- ii. social justice – racism, gender, decolonization, hospitality
- iii. development economics – wealth and poverty, inequality, food security
- iii. peace and conflict – war, migration, VAWC
- v. sustainability – ecology, land, stewardship, SDGS
- vi. exercise of power – governance, structures, x-sector partnering.
- An outline of the project’s organization(s), and a description of the outputs, and how they will achieve the completion of the summative exercise.
- Along with milestone and a timeline, a description of the wider context for the



summative exercise, with a timeline for completion. If the summative exercise is one element in a larger organizational process (e.g., a four-month initiative within a larger, 18-month project), the proposal should delineate the summative exercise's relationships to and distinctives from the wider process or project, and any relevant assumptions and risks for completion of the summative exercise.

- A description of each of the methodologies to be employed for each dimension of the summative exercise's development, and within each of its outputs.
- A substantive bibliography. By the time the proposal is submitted, you should already be aware of most of the relevant materials, although the bibliography in the proposal will be further developed by the actual research, analysis and writing of the integration paper itself.
- This proposal is four-five pages in length, plus bibliography.

5. In addition to examples you have already been exposed to in your MTS-D coursework – and may want to review, you and your supervisor may want to examine existing 'best case' versions of similar, completed projects in your proposed subject area, and conduct an initial comparative review, and offer justification for this new project.

## C) Field-based project

### Background and purpose

The intention of the field-based project is to integrate the student's learning in the MTS-D program around a question or situation arising within a specific urban community development setting or practice. The heart of the project is a research question addressed through primary quantitative and/or qualitative research. It involves analysis of a particular urban community problem, challenge or opportunity, examined within a local context, or a sampling or selection of local contexts. The project might also focus on designing and implementing a community-based assessment, a review of a program's impact, or provision of primary baseline data for an NGO or church project design.

The research question will normally be focused and specific, and grounded in a particular geography or locale, or set of organizations, NGOs, churches or denomination. For example, a research topic such as "Church Partnerships for Community Economic Development" is too general; something more focused might be: "Four Church Partnerships for Community Economic Development in Parkdale, 1995-2010."

The prerequisite for this project is that students have a working understanding of research methods for community development, and in particular are familiar with the approaches, tools and practices of Community-Based Research.

Sample topics might include:

- Incarnational approaches to community engagement and transformation in Toronto: an impact study
- The case for rethinking churches and foodbanks in the GTA
- The increased challenges of the working poor in Hamilton

- Demanding policies on affordable housing: is advocacy effective?
- The Vancouver-Jakarta child trafficking link
- Radical hospitality for refugees: churches and agencies compete in Athens
- 'End Poverty' campaign: An analysis of CPJ impact

### Specific guidelines

1. As the field-based version of the summative exercise, the suitability of the proposed project must first be addressed by the student, their academic advisor and the Basic Degree director. In order to register for this version of the MTS-D summative exercise, students must first seek approval in principle, demonstrating their capacity for primary research, their familiarity with qualitative and quantitative data collection, the suitability of their intended research question, their partner organizations and stakeholders, and the intended timeline of the summative exercise.
2. A summative exercise designed as a field research project that uses human subjects may require submission of the research proposal and plan for review and approval by the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board (REB). This adds an additional requirement of process and time. Students should carefully examine the University of Toronto's website on Ethical Research to determine whether they need to apply for an Ethics Review. For more information on U of T standards regarding the use of human subjects in research see <http://www.research.utoronto.ca/>.
3. Students should spend some time discerning their specific field research focus, and narrowing down their research question. The question needs to provide parameters for the field research which are reasonable, doable and coherent with the student's proposed outcomes for the SE.
4. Once approval in principle has been reached, the viability of the field research project should be demonstrated in the written proposal, to be submitted before or early in the SE semester of study. It should include the following information:
  - The theme and content of the project, together with its rationale, importance and implications. A specific title should be proposed.
  - The focused research question or thesis to be addressed, must be detailed and explained. A research question or thesis states concisely the particular issue to be examined, and all of its parameters.
  - A statement of the intended learning outcomes for you, the stakeholders and the participants, and a description of any of the relationships and partnerships on which the research project's success depends.
  - An outline of the organization(s) involved in the project, and a description of the outputs, and how they will achieve the completion of the summative exercise.
  - A description of the wider context for the summative exercise, with a timeline for completion. If this summative exercise is only one element in a larger organizational process (e.g., a four-month initiative within a larger, 18-month project), the proposal should delineate the summative exercise's relationships to and distinctives from the wider process or project, and any relevant assumptions and risks for completion of the summative exercise.

- A description of each of the primary and secondary methodologies to be employed in the summative exercise, and within each of its outputs.
- A clear indication of the knowledge and skills required by the student and participants to carry out the research, and matched with the proposed primary and secondary methodologies to be employed.
- A substantive bibliography. By the time the proposal is submitted, you should already be aware of most of the relevant materials, although the bibliography in the proposal will be further developed by the actual research, analysis and writing of the integration paper itself.
- This proposal is four-five pages in length, plus bibliography.

5. In order to successfully undertake the field research SE, students must demonstrate familiarity with:

- *Secondary* source material (what others say or write about the research questions – meet with the librarian for guidance on an appropriate literature review) and *primary* source material (what the original voices of individual and group participants in the field research themselves say in response to the research questions).
- The nature, limitations and possibilities of *quantitative* and *qualitative* research.
- The social science methods available and appropriate to provide reliable, field-based *data* gathered from the study of living individuals or groups of people. I.e., primary quantitative and qualitative data, voices or sources may be gathered through a range of instruments, including surveys, key informant interviews, focus groups, direct observation, ethnography, etc.

## D) Extended Research Paper, or Thesis

### Background and purpose

This option for the MTS-D summative exercise should demonstrate appropriate academic research skills, the ability to build an evidence-based social science argument, in the use of primary sources and a sound critical appreciation of the secondary literature on the chosen topic. It should demonstrate familiarity with the significant issues raised by the topic, and the range of actual and possible differences in interpretation in dealing with those issues. It should reflect a capacity for independent judgment, scholarly argument and counter-argument, and good graduate writing. Though not required, it may in exceptional circumstances make an original contribution to knowledge, and be worthy of publication.

### Specific guidelines

1. The most common error in this kind of paper is defining a thesis topic too broadly. The topic must be specific enough to enable the student to engage in a thorough, systematic and intensive study of the relevant scholarly sources, and in both principle and practice, to be able to provide persuasive evidence for every statement made in the thesis.

2. The research paper addresses a topic of importance to the student and the program, having arisen out of the MTS-D studies of theology and urban community development. Identification of the specific topic and narrowing the scope to a focused research question is critical, given the enormous breadth possible in both fields. (See example fields and disciplines listed above.)

3. The written proposal, to be submitted before or early in the SE semester of study, should include the following information:

- The topic of the paper, together with its rationale, importance and implications. A specific title should be proposed.
- The focused research question or thesis to be addressed, must be detailed and explained. A research question or thesis states concisely the particular point to be proven. It is understood that the thesis may undergo revision in the course of research and writing, but this initial proposal is necessary to focus the investigation from the beginning.
- A statement of the intended learning outcomes for you and readers.
- An outline of the paper's organization, and a description of the output. This may take the form of an analytical table of contents, with rationale.
- A description of the methodology.
- The proposal should indicate the *status quaestionis*, that is, the current state of scholarly enquiry concerning the topic, including areas of general agreement and areas of specific disagreement. The student should indicate how the proposed paper would be related to the *status quaestionis*.
- A substantive bibliography. By the time the proposal is submitted, you should already be aware of most of the relevant materials, although the bibliography in the proposal will be further developed by the actual research, analysis and writing of the integration paper itself.
- The proposal is usually three-four pages in length, plus bibliography.

4. The research paper is expected to exercise your capacities to engage the disciplines and methods of modern development's social-scientific foundations. In that sense, the paper should aim to meet the standard of proof expected of a social-scientific, evidence-based, research hypothesis, built on assessment of the range of arguments on the research issue across secondary literature.

5. The student should be aware that a research paper thesis is a very specific kind of writing, which requires, in principle, the proof of every assertion, and which therefore must avoid generalizations, speculation, special pleading, and personal value judgments. Rhetorical devices designed to impress, bully, or shame the reader into agreement should be avoided. However, it is appropriate for you to explore briefly the wider implications of their findings in a concluding chapter; here one is given latitude to adopt a more expansive tone.

6. The paper should be clearly organized. All parts of the paper should contribute directly or indirectly to demonstrating, clarifying, illustrating, or contextualizing the thesis statement. The demonstration of the thesis should proceed coherently.