



2026-27 MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT HANDBOOK

Bakke Graduate University
strengthens leaders who steward resources
with and for vulnerable people and places,
by means of contextual, Christian-based education
innovatively delivered throughout the urban world.

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The information contained in pages 1 through 22 of this document is required by BGU's accreditation association, TRACS. The "Core Appendices" is a separate document that goes into much more detail about the topics lightly touched on in this first section, which can be found by going to BGU's online library in Populi or <https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/handbooks-catalogs>.

WHO IS BGU?

HISTORY

Originally founded in 1990 under the name Northwest Graduate School of the Ministry (NWGS), Bakke Graduate University (hereinafter BGU or "the university") provides graduate level leadership education focusing on rigorous academics, immediately practical application, and involving a global constituency of faculty and students. BGU is accredited through the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) and is fully recognized by the US Department of Education. BGU has earned a strong reputation within academic Christian service, and business organizations.

During the last fifteen years, BGU has journeyed from its founding identity as a one-church based educational organization faithfully serving the Northwest United States to its current role as the school of choice for international urban leaders on five continents. This network was originally assembled as young leaders under the urban track of the Lausanne movement in the 1980s and was called the Lausanne Urban Associates. As Lausanne ended this initiative in the late 1980s, these same leaders and more were reassembled by Dr. Ray Bakke through the International Urban Associates (IUA). Now, this growing, global, urban network of leaders has acknowledged and responded to a strong need for a unifying educational experience that prepares and equips them for transformational work in a global world. BGU's strategic plan outlines the ways in which it is responding to this educational opportunity for expanded excellence in the sphere of Christian service while charting a path of outstanding stewardship and solid business practices. (See BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 1* for a more detailed history of BGU, which can be found by going to BGU's online library in Populi or <https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/handbooks-catalogs>.)

MISSION STATEMENT

BGU's mission statement is as follows:

Bakke Graduate University strengthens leaders who steward resources with and for vulnerable people and places, by means of contextual, Christian-based education innovatively delivered throughout the urban world.

ACCREDITATION

Bakke Graduate University is a member of the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) having been awarded Reaffirmed Status as a Category III and IV Institution by the TRACS Accreditation Commission on April 21, 2020; this status is effective for a period of ten years (Licensed until April 2030). TRACS is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

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GOVERNMENT AGENCY APPROVALS

Selected academic programs of study at BGU are approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for enrollment of those eligible to receive benefits under Title 38 and Title 10, U.S. Code. Veterans of United States armed services organizations should contact the Student Finance Coordinator to ensure proper documentation is presented and information is adequately communicated to the Veteran Affairs Office. Students participating in joint degrees that are the result of an agreement between BGU and an international school are not eligible for Veteran benefits.

FAITH STATEMENT

BGU was founded as a non-denominational Christian university. Doctrinally, the institution stands for the fundamentals of the faith as taught in the Christian Scriptures and handed down through the centuries by the Church. Consistent with this purpose, the faculty and directors of BGU acknowledge the creeds of the early church and the confessions of the Protestant communions to which they severally belong. BGU explicitly affirms the classic ecumenical creeds, the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, and the more recent evangelical confession known as the Lausanne Covenant (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 2*, hereinafter referred to as "the Statement of Faith"). The Board of Directors, full-time faculty and staff as well as students are invited annually to affirm BGU's Statement of Faith.

VISION

BGU looks beyond itself to embody the commonly-held vision of an international network. BGU serves and is served by a large international network of urban leaders, and its vision is shaped by these networks and partners. The vision of BGU includes the following key components (for full descriptions, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 3*):

1. Served by and Serving Emerging and Experienced Transformational Leaders
2. Proclaiming the Whole Gospel, through the Whole Church, to the Whole World
3. Kingdom Sharing
4. Bible-based Perspective and Values Education
5. Accessibility to Life-Long Learning for Global Christian Leaders
6. Web-based Educational Services

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES

The institutional objectives for BGU are as follows (for a full description of each, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 4*):

1. **Spiritual Formation:** This university will help a student have increased trust in God, while dynamically developing and stewarding its partnerships and networks.

2. **Perspective:** Shifts in worldview, mindset, new ways of seeing themselves and God, will result as the BGU 8 perspectives are integrated in students' lives and outreach/influence.
3. **Knowledge:** Prophetically disruptive and ethically sound knowledge is needed to accomplish Spiritual Formation and Perspective Transformation.
4. **Skills:** Hands-on leadership-related skills are taught, demonstrated and evaluated throughout BGU's academic and non-academic services to students.
5. **Application:** BGU students apply their learning in their life and work during their studies and after they graduate, while expanding their own partnerships and networks and becoming increasingly Christ-like.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives for all BGU's programs (for full description, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 5*):

1. Deliver Practical Ministry Instruction
2. Deliver Biblically-Based Curricula
3. Provide a Faculty Composed of Successful Global Practitioners
4. Deliver Instruction through Adult Learning Educational Approaches
5. Instill in Students a Recognition of the Diversity of the Church
6. Provide Leadership Training to Build the Local Church within a Global Perspective
7. Instill in Students the Reality of Globalization

EDUCATIONAL VALUES & PHILOSOPHY OF ENGAGEMENT

The educational values and philosophy of BGU form the guidelines of how BGU will develop courses, form networks, select students, faculty, and staff, while pursuing its unique approach to graduate education. BGU is a community formed around spiritual reflection, authentic relationships, and sacrificial service. It is an accredited higher educational institution committed to developing incarnational servant leaders who are intentional instruments of God in their communities and workplaces. BGU collaborates with an emerging global network of organizations, churches, and schools to develop transformational leaders who seek peace in their cities worldwide. For a complete list of these values, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 6*.

CORE VALUES

BGU's Core values are as follows (for full details, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 7*):

1. Passion
2. Celebration
3. Respect
4. Integrity
5. Community

MINISTRY & EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Practical Ministry Philosophy Based on Mentoring

The courses of Bakke Graduate University (BGU) are taught by seasoned instructors who are academically qualified and currently engaged in practicing what they teach. The instruction provided in the classroom is based on principles of *modeling* and *mentoring*. As in other professional fields, such as law or medicine, Christian practitioners who are being trained for Christian leadership benefit from practicing *mentors* who teach not only from a textbook but from a life of experiences. BGU's instructors have proven track records in leading effective ministries or professions, and therefore teach from a practical as well as from an academic viewpoint. The doctoral and master's degrees are designed so that Christian practitioners will accomplish significant academic growth while grounded in very real practice. The goal of BGU is to stretch, challenge and equip its students to be transformational leaders in the global context.

Academic Program Based on Biblical Foundations

The educational philosophy of BGU emphasizes the equipping of individuals for effective ministry as well as providing a sound biblical framework within which all service must take place. *All courses are taught from a biblical perspective and are Christ-centered.* The Bible is recognized as the primary and authoritative Christian text for all Christian faith and practice. Therefore, the various forms of ministry taught at BGU are defined and evaluated according to biblical descriptions. It is also recognized that all Christian service occurs within a specific cultural environment. Therefore, the content of the curricula is continually evaluated and adjusted to ensure that biblically-defined leadership principles are applied in forms which are culturally relevant to society.

The educational philosophy of BGU also focuses on the nature of the church and the formation of a biblical self-identity for pastors and professional leaders. The curriculum assumes that the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 and the Great Commandment of Matthew 22:35-40 are the standards by which all service is to be measured.

HEALTH & SECURITY

BGU strives to ensure the health and safety of its staff, faculty, and students according to and beyond relevant state and federal requirements. BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 8* provides a list of emergency procedures that are applicable in its Dallas, Texas, office and classrooms.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

BGU's desire is to create an environment that is restorative and redemptive. Therefore, with the help of the Holy Spirit, Board members, students, administrators, faculty and staff strive to live lives that reflect the Kingdom values expressed in the Community Standards of Conduct. However, violations of the expressed principles and policies described in this document and in the Lausanne Covenant may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or termination. These standards include:

1. Statement on Academic Freedom
2. Statement on Academic Integrity
3. Statement on Christian Conduct
4. Title IX

5. Statement on Non-Discrimination
6. Statement on Harassment
7. Statement on Sexual Standards
8. Statement on Respect for People and Property
9. Statement on Substance Abuse
10. Statement on Fraud and Abuse
11. Statement on Fraternization

For a detailed description of these standards, detailed information about violations of BGU's Standards of Conduct, and disciplinary sanctions, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 9*.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) adopted rules codified under Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code, Sections 1.110 – 1.120, on October 25, 2012. These rules create a student complaint procedure to comply with the U.S. Department of Education's "Program Integrity" regulations, which require each state to have a student complaint procedure in order for public and private higher education institutions to be eligible for federal Title IV funds. In December 2011, the Office of Attorney General of Texas issued an opinion stating that THECB has authority under Texas Education Code Section 61.031 to promulgate procedures for handling student complaints concerning higher education institutions. For details about this procedure, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 10*.

FRAUD, ABUSE, & ACCURATE REPRESENTATION

BGU is committed to maintaining an educational entity that is not involved in any form of fraud or abuse and will not support practices or procedures that are designed to deceive students or falsify information to students. BGU proactively investigates and resolves all complaints and other reports or findings that raise suspicion of fraud and/or abuse. Such cases and findings are reported to external regulatory and law enforcement agencies as required by law and contract. Following receipt of the complaint/fraud and abuse referral, the process for dealing with complaints is explained in BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 10*. BGU is committed to accurately representing itself to the public in all of its publications, its website, its classrooms, and any communications with others.

ACADEMIC SERVICES

BGU Website

BGU's website contains a section devoted to Student Resources which include:

- Downloadable documents (<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/student-documents-to-download>).
- Handbooks & Catalogs (<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/handbooks-catalogs>).
- Graduation Information (<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/graduation-information>).
- Title IX Information and Standards of Conduct/Clergy (<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/standards-of-conduct-clergy/title-ix>).

Orientation

BGU has created an Orientation course (PREP101) and an Orientation Packet for every incoming student. In addition to links to welcoming videos from the BGU President, Academic Dean, Registrar, and program directors, the Orientation Packet contains numerous instructional videos for assistance in writing, formatting papers, etc. In addition, BGU provides synchronous orientation sessions each term regarding online learning and resources that are recorded and made available to all students. Each faculty, at the beginning of a course, also provides an introductory synchronous course orientation session that is recorded and made available to all students enrolled in the course. (See BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 11* for the Orientation Packet.)

Writing Assistance

BGU has purchased Unicheck, a plagiarism checker that has been incorporated into Populi. When documents are uploaded into the online classroom, Unicheck will immediately show quoted materials that have not use quotation marks or proper citations.

BGU also has created a free writing certificate “course” that can assist students in learning to write academically (especially important for students for whom English is a second language). To register for this free course, students can contact BGU’s eLearning Team. Students are also provided with numerous writing resources through the Writing Center.

Library/Learning Resources

BGU offers its students a variety of alternatives for accessing books and research materials for courses and as preparation for their final projects. The onsite Library that is located at BGU’s Dallas Office contains over 4,000 volumes. There is a collection of dissertations and theses produced by BGU graduating students and there are also other research resources available to students. The library collection is cataloged and indexed, and a searchable database can be accessed on any of the computers provided in the library. The computers are also available in BGU’s Dallas Office for student use to gain access to online search engines and for internet research.

BGU’s main online library of over 6,000 volumes is made available to every student regardless of location in an online format. This library contains a rich collection of research guides and resources, and eBooks for social sciences, business, and theology. The Online Library is overseen by a MLS Librarian, Jennifer Roman (Jennifer.Roman@bgu.edu) who is available to assist students with in-depth research, search strategies, referral, and reference questions. The Online Library also provides guidance on academic writing, citation styles, and paper formatting, and provides a portal for students to express feedback and contribute suggestions on additional resources for the Online Library. Students also have off-campus access to the ProQuest® databases, which include ProQuest Religion, the ProQuest Business Research Library and the ProQuest Newsstand of national newspapers including the Christian Science Monitor. The ProQuest Databases can be found in the Research Guide section of the Online Library. Furthermore, BGU has subscribed to the EBSCO SOCindex. And for a nominal fee, students can register with the Society of Christian Scholars (www.scshub.net) and have access to the EBSCO Humanities and Behavioral Sciences Collection, Religion and Philosophy Collection, Leadership and Management Source as well as the Education Source databases.

Online Mentoring

BGU's Online Mentoring allows students the opportunity to meet with an academic advisor/mentor in group and individual settings to discuss their degree roadmap and enjoy prayer, counseling, coaching, and ongoing encouragement using either phone, Zoom, or other video technology.

BGU Online Helpdesk

BGU's Helpdesk is available to all students for easy access to Frequently-Asked Questions as well as access to technical support staff for questions, consultations, tutorials, and feedback. The Helpdesk is available Monday through Saturday, honoring Sunday as a Sabbath day.

Office of the Registrar

The Registrar's Office arranges course schedules, receives and processes student admission applications and course registrations, and maintains a repository of academic records. Students should contact the Registrar for official and unofficial transcripts, registration information, financial account questions, issues concerning grades, and any other inquiries related to student records. Appointments may be scheduled for advisement on course schedules, class registration, etc., by contacting the Registrar via email at Registrar@bgu.edu.

Counseling and Advising Appointments

Upon admission, each student is assigned a specific advisor. The role of the advisor is to guide the student to make the best academic choices for the development of his/her degree and to ensure the student's best integration and growth with BGU. It is the advisor's responsibility to contact his/her advisee at least once a month. Students are required to keep appointments with that advisor throughout the course of their degree programs. To schedule an advising appointment, students may contact BGU at (214) 329-4447, or via email. For students who are unable to attend an appointment in person, a phone/Zoom appointment will be scheduled. In addition to the student's academic advisor, the Director of Student Services (Katie Berube) and Director of Spiritual Formation (Dr. Nita Kotiuga), the following staff and/or faculty members are also available for advising appointments:

Doctoral Degree Students	
Prospective Students	Allison Sherwin (Allison.Sherwin@bgu.edu)
Admission Procedures	Allison Sherwin (Allison.Sherwin@bgu.edu)
General Academic Questions	Bunmi Morgan (Bunmi.Morgan@bgu.edu)
General Academic Advisor	Martine Audéoud (Martine.Audeoud@bgu.edu)
DMin/DTL Dissertations	Bill Payne (Bill.Payne@bgu.edu)
PhD Dissertations	Martine Audéoud (Martine.Audeoud@bgu.edu)
Master's Degree Students	
Prospective Students	Allison Sherwin (Allison.Sherwin@bgu.edu)
Admission Procedures	Allison Sherwin (Allison.Sherwin@bgu.edu)
General Academic Questions	Bunmi Morgan (Bunmi.Morgan@bgu.edu)
General Academic Advisor	Martine Audéoud (Martine.Audeoud@bgu.edu)
Master's Final Project	Yvonne McKenzie (Yvonne.McKenzie@bgu.edu)
Capstone Project (EMBA)	Scholastica Olagunju (Scholastica.Olagunju@bgu.edu)

ADMISSION POLICIES

Admissions Standards

BGU graduate programs have a unique focus on global urban leadership realities. The university is committed to the equipping of transformational leaders in business or various forms of Christian service. BGU not only seeks to strengthen those who come with traditional academic qualifications but also those who lead effective transformational organizations and who have a proven record of leadership without a traditional academic background. In many settings, both internationally and nationally, leaders have not had adequate access to educational opportunities. Non-Western and non-formal qualitative learning is given considerable value at BGU. Based on these convictions, BGU encourages transformational leaders worldwide to apply for its graduate programs. Each applicant will be evaluated on his/her merit and will receive a recommendation from the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet, regarding the most appropriate academic program. Students who are re-entering a BGU program after having gone away for several years need to fill the Special Program Extension Request form with new PLCs that will be presented to and approved by the AC. For specific standards, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 12*.

Student Status Classifications

BGU students are classified under various classifications ranging from full-time, to part-time, auditors, and educational experiences. For a complete list and definition of each, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 13*.

Transfer Credit Policy

If students have accumulated credits from other academic institutions that they believe may be applicable to their BGU degree, they may petition the Academic Dean at the time of admission for transfer of those credits (advanced standing). The Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet, may approve a transfer of a maximum of 50% of the total required credits in the degree program. Only courses for which the applicant has received a B or better will be considered for transfer. For the complete process, please refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 14*.

On occasion, credits from a non-accredited institution may be counted as credit toward a BGU degree. For the full explanation and requirements, please refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 57*.

Admission Requirements & Procedures

Admission to any of the master's programs or doctoral programs at BGU is based on a selection process conducted by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet. The Academic Cabinet reviews each application thoroughly to determine the applicant's qualifications, as well as compatibility of the university programs to the applicant's educational goals. The applicant will then be approved by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet after all required application materials have been received by the university. For the step-by-step process, please refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 15*.

Personal Learning Community

BGU attributes much of its students' educational success to what is called the "Personal Learning Community" (or PLC). Students identifying three to five individuals or PLC members who agree to support the student during the course of his/her studies. The admissions process includes the requirement that a minimum of three PLC members must be identified, each of whom shall submit a completed PLC Agreement to BGU before an applicant will be considered for acceptance. The PLC can be close friends, co-workers, pastors, spouse, children, etc., each of whom will be asked to read assignments, provide periodic evaluations, and assist the student in staying accountable to completing their degree. For a description of the specific requirements of the PLC, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 16*.

English Language Proficiency

Each student must demonstrate English-proficiency by: (1) showing that English is his/her native language, or (2) by having successfully completed an undergraduate or graduate school program in which English is the primary method of instruction, or (3) exhibiting sufficient English-language capabilities to succeed in the classroom and in BGU programs as measured by a score of not less than 80 on the internet-based TOEFL or TOEFL-equivalent exams taken within the last five years. As an alternative to the TOEFL, BGU will accept the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) if a student has scored 6.5 or better, or a copy of the certificate that is awarded at the completion of the Total Immersion Program (TIP). Applicants who can fulfill the qualifications may submit a TOEFL Waiver Request with their application.

Students who are taking the TOEFL test should use BGU's code number of **0709** so BGU will receive the final score directly from the testing agency. For on-line information about TOEFL testing locations and practice tests go to www.ets.org/toefl.

Minimum Technology Requirements

Since *every* BGU course includes participation via the internet, the minimum requirements for participating in courses for both students and professors include:

1. For email attachments: with dial-up connection a 1MB file can take 10 minutes to download.
2. For rich content web pages: dial up (54KB) will be able to load but it will take a while. If the document contains a number of embedded images and media, 512KB will be sufficient.
3. For Audio Steaming: at least 128 KB for Web Conferencing (video with low resolution/quality options): 900KB for two-person video session, higher for more participants. For better quality: 3.5 MB-10 MB for streaming video.
4. For students to be fully visible and audibly present in online interactions/classes: the use of a webcam and good microphone speakers is recommended.

International Students

The term "international student" is used at BGU to denote both internationals who attend courses in the United States on visas, as well as those who are legal, permanent residents of the United States. BGU is not authorized to issue visa documents for the F-1 Student Visa.

Admission as Special Student

Any applicant who does not meet the admission requirements of an individual degree is conditionally admitted under “Special Student Status” (SSS). Persons who are interested in applying to a degree program under SSS are asked to complete the online application and to provide official or unofficial transcripts and a current CV or resume to the Admissions Office for preliminary review. The applicants applying for a master’s degree are also asked to fill out an equivalency worksheet if they have not graduated with the requisite undergraduate degree. This worksheet will assist the Academic Dean in determining whether the courses and work previously completed are of a sufficient quality and quantity to be considered for SSS before the applicant is presented to the Academic Cabinet. The Academic Dean will recommend the path of either a degree completion program elsewhere or admission under SSS. The Academic Dean’s recommendation of potential eligibility is required in order to be permitted to continue the SSS application process. BGU allows a maximum of 15% of its student body to be classified as SSS. In the event an applicant requires admission under SSS and BGU already has reached the 15% maximum of its enrollment designated as SSS, the applicant will be required to wait one or two terms until an opening occurs before being admitted. As of the date of the approval of BGU’s handbooks and catalog by the Academic Cabinet and the Board of Directors, 14 students were identified as SSS, which represents less than 6% of the total student body.

Students under SSS who do not maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) or who do not complete any courses for a period of one year or more will be automatically withdrawn. Students admitted under SSS will be required to take a minimum of two 4-credit (or 3-credit for MA) courses per year and maintain a 3.0 GPA. If students are unable to take two courses per year, they will be placed on a leave of absence and removed from SSS. If and when they return to active student status and there are no SSS slots available, students will be placed on a waiting list and will only be allowed to take courses once they are reinstated to SSS. Once students have successfully completed two courses, they will be removed from SSS. For more details, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 17*.

Admission with a Degree-Completion Program

Qualified applicants who are studying in a BGU-approved degree-completion program at the bachelor-degree level and who have one year or less remaining in that program may apply for a BGU master’s degree program. Applicants may be accepted “pending bachelor’s degree completion.” Upon acceptance, students will then be eligible to take up to two courses prior to the Registrar’s receipt of their final official transcripts.

Special Needs Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 mandate equal opportunities for students to participate in or benefit from the services offered by BGU. As such, BGU endeavors to respond to the special needs of students with disabilities. Ramps and elevators provide access to BGU’s Dallas, Texas, offices and classrooms. Special efforts are made to schedule classes in facilities that are accessible, and parking places are reserved in all campus parking areas.

A qualified individual under the ADA must have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities involve caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

A qualified student with a disability must meet the academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in an education program or activity. It is the responsibility of the student to make his/her needs known in a timely manner to the Director of Student Services of BGU. Reviewing and granting accommodation for special needs can take up to eight weeks, so students should ensure timely processing of their needs by communicating in writing the type of accommodation as soon as possible.

Students reading in English for whom English is a second language (ESL) may read or write 25% slower than what is required of English-speaking students. Students who are reading or writing in Chinese should calculate that 10 pages of English are equal to seven pages of Chinese.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Tuition and Fees

BGU seeks to provide excellence in education, while keeping costs as reasonable as possible. Student tuition and fees cover only a portion of the total operating costs of the university. The charges listed are effective as of July 1, 2023, and are subject to change without notice. Tuition and fees will change periodically and students are *required to pay the rates in effect at the time each course is held*. It is incumbent upon the student to verify current rates. All amounts are quoted in US Dollars. Check BGU's website for Administrative Fee for specific classes, which varies for each course. For a list of all tuition and fees, see BGU Core Appendices-Appendix 18.

- All students and auditors must pay the full tuition and fees prior to gaining access to the first day of class unless that student has made prior arrangements with the Director of Finance to make monthly payments or they have been approved for a FAFSA student loan.
- New applicants must also either pay all tuition and fees prior to the first day of class or at the very least make payments consistently while in class according to payment plans. Failure to do so before the end of the first month of class will result in a "course lock" (i.e. student will be locked out of class) until agreed payment has been made.
- All payment plan students must make their first payment prior to the first course in order to gain access to the course. Failure to do so before the end of the first month of class will result in a "course lock" (i.e. student will be locked out of class) until agreed payment has been made.

Course Registration

Course tuition and fees are due 14 days prior to the first day of the on-line portion of the course. Students who have not made payment or arranged for a payment plan will have a Financial Lock added to their account until the above-mentioned arrangements are made with BGU's Finance Department. Students will not be allowed to take classes unless their accounts are paid in full, or they have a payment plan in place on which they are current. The Administrative Fee is due at the same time as tuition except for city immersion courses. The Onsite Administrative Fees for city immersion courses are due six weeks prior to the onsite portion of the course and are, for the most part, non-refundable.

Those who attend a city immersion but fail to complete all assignments by agreed-upon deadlines will forfeit all tuition and fees. If the course tuition was not yet paid in full, the student's account will be assessed for all course tuition and fees, if applicable.

Refund Policy

Courses require considerable advance preparation and expense by the university based on student registrations and deposits. Therefore, the following refund policies are enforced, based upon when a student withdraws from a course in relation to the course starting date. For the full refund policy, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 19*.

Course Extensions

A student may apply for extensions due to extenuating circumstances as long as 80% of the coursework has already been completed. For the full refund policy, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 26*.

Financial Aid

BGU understands the financial stress that can result from the pursuit of graduate-level education. To help ease that burden, BGU has sought to identify various financial aid opportunities for qualified students wishing to attend BGU, but who do not have the financial resources to do so. BGU's hope is that these resources and financial aid packages will help students move forward with their educational goals. For more details about financial aid, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 20*. For information about Title IV funding, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 21*.

Financial Appeals Process

If a student feels that his/her situation warrants an exception to the financial policies or regulations, he or she is encouraged to file a written appeal to the Registrar for consideration by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet. The Office of the Registrar will be responsible for investigating the circumstances of the appeal and making a report to the Academic Dean for final resolution at the next Cabinet meeting.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Identity Verification in Distance Learning

BGU's identity verification policy applies to all credit-bearing distance education courses or programs offered by BGU, beginning with the application for admission and continuing through to a student's graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from study. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that BGU operates in compliance with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) concerning the verification of student identity in distance education.

The HEOA requires that institutions offering distance education courses or programs have processes in place to ensure that the student registering for a course is the same student who participates in the course or receives course credit. For more details, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 22*.

Student's Right to Know Act

The Student Right-to-Know Act, passed by Congress in 1990, requires for institutions eligible for Title IV funding, under the Higher Education Act of 1965, to calculate completion or

graduation rates of certificate- or degree-seeking, full-time students entering that institution, and to disclose these rates to current and prospective students. Since Bakke Graduate University (BGU) is an institution that participates in a Title IV program it is required to disclose graduation/completion rates of all students by race/ethnicity, gender and by sport (not applicable), and the average completion or graduation rate for the four most recent years. To read more about the Student Right-to-Know Act, please visit the National Center for Education Statistics website at <http://nces.ed.gov> and see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 23* for the updated version of BGU's graduation rates, which are also available on BGU's website at:

<https://bgu.edu/about/university-profile/student-right-to-know-act>.

Student Privacy (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of personally identifiable information contained in a student's educational record. FERPA applies to all schools that receive funds under various programs from the U.S. Department of Education. See BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 24*.

Security Program

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued final regulations to amend the Standards for Safeguarding Customer Information. These requirements mandate that BGU have a program in which protects student financial aid information. BGU's Security Program is outlined in detail in the Core Appendices-*Appendix 59*.

Online Courses/Distance Education

According to TRACS, the Federal definition of *Distance Education* is "education that uses one or more of the technologies listed to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMS, if used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed above."

All of BGU's courses include an online component and most courses are completely online. The Populi online software is BGU's Learning Management System (LMS). The minimum requirement for BGU's courses is a computer and reliable access to the Internet, which is the same requirement for all courses for all students. Students register for online courses just as they register for hybrid courses in Populi. The student will be required to participate in both synchronous and asynchronous class interactions, which include online discussions, real-time virtual classroom sessions, readings, and other requirements which, if not fulfilled, will result in a lower grade, as described in the syllabus for each course. Students and professors are required to be in direct and substantive communication on a weekly basis throughout the course.

Independent or Directed Studies

Students may include a total of two courses (or maximum 8 credits) of independent studies in their program. PhD students are allowed a total of three courses (or maximum of 12

credits) of independent studies in their program. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet. An Independent Study is defined as a course that the student designs with the assistance of a professor or a course in which the student is working with the professor individually, and not in conjunction with other students. One of the unique characteristics of BGU is its global student body; therefore, it encourages students to take classes where interaction with this international cohort enriches the learning experience. See BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 25* for details. Independent and Directed Studies require the student and professor to meet weekly during the 3-month module in which the course is taken.

Correspondence Courses

According to TRACS, the Federal definition of correspondence education is “education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor; interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student; correspondence courses are typically self-paced; and correspondence education is not distance education.” No correspondence courses are available to BGU students.

Changing Course Credits

A student can only be allowed to increase or decrease the number of credits for a course upon review and agreement of the Academic Dean and agreement of the student’s Program Director. A student can only double a course’s credits twice in the course of a program.

Course Requirements

BGU's degree programs include fully online courses as well as hybrid courses that combine online components with face-to-face urban immersions, local cohorts and mentors. Urban immersions are held in various large cities on five continents and all travel expenses are the responsibility of the student. BGU has strict attendance policies, reading, assignments, and projects. For a full description of these requirements, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 26*.

Grading Policies

Course grades are submitted by the instructor to the Registrar’s Office approximately two to four weeks following the date the students submit their projects. Final grades are based upon the course syllabus. Any course grade below a 2.67 GPA or B- will not be considered passing. Students must maintain an overall minimum 3.00 GPA to graduate. Students receiving a low course grade may invoke a one-time opportunity to resubmit their assignments. The student must then re-submit the revised project or assignments within 30 days of receiving the final grade and pay an additional \$100 to have the work re-graded. After the re-submission, the grade may be changed at the discretion of the course instructor or Academic Dean if warranted by an improved project and/or assignment. Grade points are calculated by multiplying the grade numerical value by the number of credit hours for a class. Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by dividing the total grade points by the total accumulated credit hours. If a student’s overall GPA drops below 3.00, that student will be placed on Academic Probation and has one year to bring their GPA up to 3.00 or above. If the student fails to bring the overall GPA to above 3.00 within the

one-year period, he/she will be withdrawn from the school. (See the Grading Scale BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 27*.)

Grading Rubrics

BGU has designed grading rubrics that shall be used by all professors in determining the grades for all student projects, online interaction, journals, etc. Rubrics are loaded into every course in Populi, BGU's LMS, under "Files." To see some of the rubrics in BGU's online library, go to: <https://bgu.populiweb.com/library/resource.php?resourceID=11175577>

Credit Hour Definition

According to TRACS, the Federal definition of a credit hour is as follows: "A credit hour for Federal purposes is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates some minimum amount of student work reflective of the amount of worked expected in a Carnegie unit: key phrases being 'institutionally established,' 'equivalency,' 'reasonable approximate,' and 'minimum amount.'" For graduate-level work, one credit hour for BGU students is defined by the academic work consisting of professor instruction/student interaction, reading assignments, group projects, class presentations, and independent project work and is equivalent to a minimum of 45 hours of work. Each degree program defines how many credit hours are needed to earn the degree.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

All students must meet the following standards of academic achievement to be classified as students in Good Standing. The qualitative standard requires the student to achieve and maintain a minimum overall or cumulative grade point average of 3.0 for the entirety of the program. The quantitative standard requires all students to complete their program of study within the normal time frame for completing the program. For details about how BGU determines SAP, academic probation, and dismissal, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 29*.

Degree Program Duration and Time Limits

A maximum of seven (7) years and minimum of three (3) years will be allowed to complete a BGU degree. The time limit will begin on the student's acceptance date. An extension may be granted, at the discretion of the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet, if the student demonstrates steady progress toward degree completion and has a legitimate need for more time. Extensions must be requested in writing to the Registrar's Office explaining the extenuating circumstances and providing a projected completion date.

Withdrawal from the University

There are two ways in which students may be withdrawn:

1. *Request Withdrawal:* Students requesting a withdrawal should submit a "Request to Withdraw" (found on BGU's website at <https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/student-documents-to-download>) and submit to the Registrar's Office (Registrar@bgu.edu). The Academic Dean or Registrar will seek to hold a face-to-face or Zoom exit interview with a withdrawing student or at a minimum ask the withdrawing student to fill out an Exit Interview form. If withdrawing is due to financial reasons, arrangements need to be made to pay any outstanding balance due BGU.

2. *Withdrawal due to lack of involvement:* Students will be withdrawn who a) fail to request extensions for coursework that is more than six months overdue, b) are inactive for more than 12 months and have not responded to any BGU communications, or c) maintaining an outstanding balance for over a year without contacting BGU to set up a payment plan. The Registrar's Office will give the student a 30-day cautionary email (and copy the student's advisor) before proceeding with the withdrawal.

Reinstatement of Withdrawn Students

A maximum of seven (7) years and minimum of three (3) years will be allowed to complete the doctoral programs (DMin, DTL, and PhD). A maximum of six (6) years and, except for transfer students, a minimum of two (2) years will be allowed to complete the master's programs (MATL). The time limit will begin on the student's acceptance date.

Students who want to be reinstated after having been withdrawn or inactive for over a year and less than 7 years will need to petition the Academic Dean's office for approval and will need to update their personal data and PLC contact information. If the student has attended any other institution(s) during his/her absence, arrangements must be made for an official transcript (showing good standing) to be sent from each institution to the Office of Admissions (see Transfer policy above). Exceptions and appeals may be made to the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet.

Teach Out Policy

In the event that BGU is forced to close its doors or to eliminate a program, it has a developed a policy to care for every current student to ensure either a teach out or transfer to another accredited institution to complete his or her degree. See BGU Core Appendices-Appendix 60.

Degree Extension

BGU, in accordance with standard academic procedures, requires that a student complete his/her program within seven years, including all coursework and final projects, from the date on which the student enrolled for his or her first course. Any student who has not completed the degree within the 7-year limitation may appeal to the Academic Dean, in consultation with the Academic Cabinet, to be allowed to exceed the limitation by filling out a Degree Extension Request (downloadable from <https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/student-documents-to-download>). This document includes a short statement about why the student was unable to complete the program within the 7-year limit as well as a plan for completion within a relatively short period of time, which will need to be approved by the Academic Dean in consultation with the Academic Cabinet.

Dissertation Advisory Team

BGU's Director of Final Projects coordinates a Dissertation Advisory Team. The purpose of that team is to review dissertation proposals, review the congruence of expertise between proposed dissertation supervisors and second readers and the theme of a given dissertation, as well as to review any academic issue pertaining to the dissertation writing process. It reports to the Academic Cabinet on a monthly basis.

Dissertation in Foreign Language

Because BGU has partnerships with organizations around the globe, there are instances when students may wish to write their dissertation in their native language. While BGU approves that practice, there are certain parameters that guide that practice. For the specific requirements refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 58*.

Graduation Policy

BGU's academic curriculum and course calendar is designed for a June Graduation; however, BGU students may complete their coursework anytime during the year and their transcript will indicate they have met the requirements of their designated degree program (if all financial obligations have been met). A commencement ceremony is held once a year on the first Saturday in June every year. All graduating students are encouraged to attend and to invite their friends and family to celebrate their accomplishment during June commencement service. DTL and DMin students must complete the majority of their core classes before they will be allowed to take the dissertation proposal writing course (RES701). A student may appeal this decision by submitting a request to the Academic Cabinet via the Registrar's Office. See further graduation and candidacy requirements listed under each degree program.

All charges assessed to the student's account, e.g., course tuition, graduation fees, library fees, Dissertation, or Masters Final Project (MFP) fees, etc., must be paid in full before a degree will be issued. The deadline to submit all required course work, final projects, and payment of all dues for the June graduation is April 30 (or before an oral review can be scheduled, whichever comes first).

The Catalog in effect at the time of a student's matriculation shall determine the complete requirements for graduation. The Dissertation Handbook that was in effect when the student took the research course will contain the requirements by which that student must abide when writing his/her dissertation. Any exceptions to this policy or special cases will be handled by the Academic Dean in consultation with the Academic Cabinet.

Audit Registration Policy

Auditing students, spouses of students, and alumni may register for courses up to six (6) weeks before the first day of the professor-led class session/immersion portion of a course, *depending upon space availability*.

BGU's Social Media Policy & Disclaimer

Bakke Graduate University encourages interaction among users on BGU's social media sites but is not responsible for the content of other contributors published on any official BGU websites, pages, or affiliates. This is including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Foursquare, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest and all other social media websites listed here or not listed. For details about BGU's policy, please see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 30*.

Bakke Graduate University thanks any contributor in advance for their contributions to the university's social media pages, and for their compliance and assistance in creating a safe and vibrant online community. BGU abides by the European General Data Protection Regulations (EGDPR) (<https://gdpr-info.eu/>) in its communications. Any questions or concerns should be emailed to info@bgu.edu.

Wiki-websites & Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT, etc.)

BGU discourages the use of Wiki-related websites since they are not academically peer reviewed. BGU also discourages the use of artificial intelligence programs like ChatGPT or Jasper to create original academic documents since those sources cannot be properly cited, thus posing the issue of plagiarism. Furthermore, the information provided by such sources is often not academically reliable and may not reflect the original and critical thinking processes of the author.

Finally, students need to ensure that the privacy of the subjects of their research is protected. AI-related sources are not private nor encrypted, thus open to the whole world. Once something has been uploaded to one of these sites, that information becomes available to anyone who uses the service. Private or institutional proprietary data should thus not be shared over Wiki- or AI-related sites.

On the other hand, Wiki- and AI-related tools may be used to provide certain information that students may need to critically evaluate a particular topic or subject. See for instance the following article from the American Psychological Association:

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2023/06/chatgpt-learning-tool>.

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) provides generally that: 1) students shall have the right of access to their educational records; and 2) educational institutions shall not release educational records to non-school employees without the consent of the student (or former student). With few exceptions, which are provided by law, students may see any of their educational records upon written request to the Registrar. For more details, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 31*.

Transcripts

All transcript requests must be authorized in person or in writing and must include the student's full name, Social Security number (US taxpayers only), date of birth, dates of attendance at BGU, the complete name and address of the office or person to whom the transcript is to be sent, and the signed authorization to release the transcript. There is a \$5.00 charge for every transcript issued. A minimum of *four days'* notice is required when requesting copies of official transcripts. A Transcript Request can be downloaded from the BGU website:

<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/student-documents-to-download>.

Institutional Review Board

Bakke Graduate University (BGU) requires the conduct of ethical practices in relation to all research related to human subjects. BGU has adopted the guidelines outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 (Public Welfare), Part 46 (Protection of Human Subjects). This document is available at <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/regulations/45-cfr-46/index.html>

Before collecting data related to specific types of research with human subjects, all students, faculty, project supervisors, and other staff members must obtain approval from the BGU Institutional Review Board (IRB) when required by the guidelines established in Federal regulations § 45 CFR 46 and described in the *BGU Institutional Review Board Policy and Procedure Manual* (available on the BGU website). Engaging in research with human subjects

without IRB approval when required has serious ethical implications and violates university and Federal policies. Some categories of research that will probably require approval of the IRB include the following:

1. Research involving interaction with children
2. Research involving prisoners
3. Research that involves deception or withholding of information from subjects
4. Research that involves intense physical exercise
5. Research that may cause emotional distress or discomfort greater than what would be expected in daily life

The IRB team coordinator reports to the Academic Cabinet on a monthly basis. For more information on the types of research requiring IRB approval, visit the BGU website.

<https://bgu.edu/students/student-resources/handbooks-catalogs>

Referral Policy

Current BGU students may earn tuition credit by referring a new student to BGU. For the guidelines and the complete policy, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 56*.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS: DESCRIPTION, REQUIREMENTS & OUTCOMES

Bakke Graduate University currently offers five U.S. Accredited Academic Programs. Students in all five programs are invited to attend courses with those in other degrees, thus providing them with the additional advantage of experiencing BGU's unique geographic, cultural, and organizationally diverse relationships. BGU degrees provide theological, operational, and personal skill sets for entry into the most diverse range of world realities, from a call and ministry with those in abject poverty to a call and ministry with those in the corridors of the powerful. All five programs engage the unique niche areas of expertise in the BGU network of students, alumni, and faculty. For a list of the areas of expertise for each of these individuals, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 32*.

Master of Arts in Transformational Leadership (MATL)

The Master of Arts in Transformational Leadership (MATL) degree is designed especially for urban ministry leaders who desire greater expertise and skill in leading transformation in cities or for leaders of start-up organizations or small to medium-sized existing organizations, who need practical skills in leading teams and organizations. Students can specialize in personal leadership development or dig deeper in the core topic areas of relief, development or advocacy. Students can also access a unique set of theological core courses designed for leaders working with younger populations in global urban centers. Through Elective and Capstone courses, this degree is designed to contribute to the student's unique personal and organizational needs. For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 33*, and for the program outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 34*.

Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)

Bakke Graduate University offers an accredited, values-driven Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) degree for working adults that takes into account the worldwide marketplace trends and the need for organizations that are both socially responsible

and profitable in today's global contexts. This degree is designed to provide students with the knowledge, perspective, models, mentors, relationships, and skills to address their work, their calling, and the whole of their life in an integrated manner. Leaders enrolled in this EMBA can be involved in for-profit, non-profit organizations (NGO) or governmental organizations. The EMBA is a hybrid program that includes both online and face-to-face courses and immersions into global best business practices. Students are exposed to cross-cultural, internationally-oriented faculty, case-studies, historic, and emerging trends in the various fields of substantive, advanced business study. Students will also have opportunities to travel as part of their education to see first-hand the application of these skill sets and principles. The BGU EMBA is unique as every topic is taught from the perspective of social, spiritual, economic and environmental transformation of students' own lives, their organizations, cities and industry sectors. BGU's EMBA graduates are prepared to integrate their work, character and calling to make a positive difference in their career and impact. For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 35*, and for the program outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 36*.

Doctor of Ministry (DMin)

BGU's Doctor of Ministry (DMin) is a ministry degree program designed to enhance the leadership skills of individuals engaged in Christian ministry. BGU's DMin program is unique in many ways. We are not recruiting lone rangers into this program, but ministry leaders. The DMin is distinct from the PhD or ThD in that its primary focus is on implementing and strengthening effective ministry rather than preparing the participant for research or teaching in purely academic arenas. BGU follows the medical model of preparing doctors for surgery in the operating room. At BGU, the cities are the labs, and practitioners are professors. Although the DMin is not designed as simply a research degree, in recent years many seminary educators have chosen the DMin degree to enhance their ability to provide training relevant to practical issues in Christian ministry.

Those who pursue a DMin with BGU will obtain a doctoral education in the discipline of ministry to provide global transformation throughout the world. Students who have graduated with a DMin from BGU have utilized their degrees to:

- Plant global churches
- Develop and engage missional ministries throughout the world
- Pastor churches globally implementing ministries to transform lives and communities
- Develop faith-based non-profits
- Develop global mentoring ministries to disciple global communities
- Leadership development that has a global impact in the church and the community
- Develop ministries that assist individuals who are oppressed and abused to provide liberation and transformation

For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 37*, and for the program outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 38*.

Doctor of Transformational Leadership (DTL)

The Doctor of Transformational Leadership (DTL) is designed for leaders in organizations that are focused on urban relief, development or advocacy, economic, political, social or cultural influence, from a Christian perspective. These organizations can be non-profit, for-profit or government entities. BGU asks every student to write every assignment, including the Dissertation, in ways that benefit his/her sending organization. The DTL is distinct from the

PhD or the EdD in that its primary focus is on implementing and strengthening effective organizational practices rather than preparing the participant for research or teaching in purely academic arenas. Once the student has completed his/her degree both the organization and the student will have been strengthened. For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 39*, and for the program outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 40*.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Innovative Urban Leadership

The PhD in Innovative Urban Leadership is designed to equip scholar-practitioners and thought leaders to innovate in the urban context. Leaders will accomplish this goal as they build on demonstrated leadership practice and research skills to exemplify sustainable and regenerative leadership grounded in collaboration, community, and context. For the program outcomes, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 51*. For the Program Outline, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 52*.

Degree Completion Requirements

For the details of each degree's completion requirements, see BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 41*.

High Honors

The designation of "High Honors" will be given to graduates, and designated on their diploma, when they have graduated with high honors in light of having attained an overall GPA of 4.0 or higher to attest to the high quality of their work. Graduating with honors is based on the GPA earned at BGU (not transferred credits).

Academic Calendar

To see the current academic calendar, refer to BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 42*.

Role of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as "the Board") has ultimate legal responsibility for governance of the institution. The Board is a legislative, not an executive, body with primary responsibility for the determination of policy. The Board's primary role is to ensure the financial and legal health of the school and to oversee the hiring, firing, and activities of the Chief Executive Officer (President). The Board establishes broad policies which are executed by the President and his/her executive administration. While the President is always free to recommend policy, the Board determines policy and carries out its programs and exercises its control through the President. The Board's major responsibility is to assist, guide, and evaluate the progress of the institution. The Board holds the President accountable for effective administration of the school. (See the Organizational Chart for lines of authority in BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 50* and the members of the Board of Directors in *Appendix 46*).

Staff and Faculty

See the following appendices for a complete list of BGU's administrative staff (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 43*), adjunct faculty (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 44*), resource faculty (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 45*), Board of Regents (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 47*), and all staff (BGU Core Appendices-*Appendix 48*).

Academic Cabinet

The Chief Academic Officer is responsible for decisions affecting the academic integrity and effectiveness of the University and will delegate portions of this responsibility to the appropriate individual staff and faculty leaders. The Academic Cabinet serves as a standing advice process entity to support this effort. The Academic Cabinet advises regarding student acceptance and scheduling of courses, appointing of faculty, maintenance of all BGU academic documents such as the catalog, handbooks, curriculum, and syllabi.

Bakke Graduate University reserves the right, but is not obligated, to remove comments or posts that are racist, sexist, abusive, profane, violent, obscene or spam; that advocate illegal activity, include falsehoods, contain commercial solicitations, are wildly off-topic, or cannot be translated to English using free online tools; that libel, incite, threaten or make ad hominem attacks on BGU students, employees, guests or others. BGU also reserves the right to remove comments or posts that are deemed negative or offensive by the page's administrators. Violators will be banned from the page.

Office of the Registrar

The Registrar's Office arranges course schedules, receives and processes student admission applications and course registrations, and maintains a repository of academic records. Students should contact the Registrar for official and unofficial transcripts, registration information, financial account questions, issues concerning grades, and any other inquiries related to student records. Appointments may be scheduled for advisement on course schedules, class registration, etc., by contacting the Registrar Registrar@bgu.edu or calling Julia Burk at the BGU office at 214-329-4447 ext. 120.

CERTIFICATES

Intensive Certificates

Graduate Certificates and Professional Development Certificates are opportunities for life-long learners to glean from what BGU has to offer without the commitment to a full graduate-level degree. For more information on certificates, please see BGU Core Appendices – *Appendix 53*.

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to provide assistance to the Master of Transformational Leadership (MATL) degree candidates in developing their Master's Final Project (MFP). The MFP represents a culmination of the candidate's coursework, field experiences, and research. The writing of the MFP report generally takes place during the candidate's third year or the completion of 30 to 33 of the 36 credits required for the master's program.

The MFP focuses on how the student realized transformation themselves and in the lives of the people around them. The BGU academic programs focus on the concept of *Transformational Leadership for the Global City*. Transformational leadership involves the ability to empower others, congregations, communities, cities, and organizational systems to experience greater levels of God's *shalom*. The MFP focuses on the personal transformation of the student within the specific context of the candidate's sphere of influence and must include references to one or more of the eight perspectives of transformational leadership taught at BGU, although the optimum goal is to include them all.¹

MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT PROCESS SUMMARIZED

The candidate's Personal Learning Community (PLC), which was the small group formed at the time of the candidate's admission to BGU, is an essential component of the MFP process designed to facilitate a collaborative learning process of shared thinking and decision-making with others within the candidate's work/ministry context. In relation to the MFP process, PLC members will be invited to the oral review portion of the project and provide feedback to the candidate.

ESSENTIAL MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT STANDARDS

The Master's Final Project must:

1. reflect the depth of theological and sociological insights in relation to the candidate's experience at BGU
2. demonstrate a clear and concise writing style appropriate to master's level work (BGU accepts APA standards described later in this handbook)
3. show evidence of collaborative learning within the candidate's PLC and among others affected by the project
4. describe how the candidate will apply what was learned over the next three to five years

WRITING STANDARDS

The MFP is to be written in accordance with appropriate academic writing standards. BGU accepts APA7 writing standards, and templates are available on the BGU website, the Populi online library or from the Registrar. APA standards are based on the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Edition). If students write a MFP in their mother language, they must present an abstract in English that meets the English standards of grammar and formatting. Each MFP is expected to be worthy of publication and distribution to the

¹ The BGU transformational leadership perspectives include incarnational, servant-based, global, contextual, shalom-producing, reflective, prophetic, and calling-based leadership.

Christian community. The MFP can also be made available to the public on BGU's website and to BGU students in the online library if the student signs a release form.

SUMMARY OF MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT PHASES

Candidates are encouraged to begin thinking about their final project during the first course of their program. This initial consideration will ensure an understanding of the process early in the program, allowing the candidate to formulate a project based on their concentration. The following is a summary of the MFP phases, and more details are provided throughout this handbook.

- **Phase 1 – Editors and Proofreaders.** After the MFP Supervisor has approved the first draft of the MFP, the candidate should hire an editor or proofreader (depending on the level of editing needed) to assist in the production of the final draft of the project.
- **Phase 2 –PLC.** Once revisions have been made to the MFP based on recommendations by an editor or proofreader, the PLC should be given the document to read and provide feedback, which is to be summarized and included in the final chapter of the MFP.
- **Phase 3 – BGU Technical Reader.** After revisions are made to the MFP based on recommendations from the Second Reader, a Microsoft Word document of the project is to be emailed to the Registrar who will forward it to the Technical Reader. The candidate is to make revisions to the MFP based on recommendations from the Technical Reader. The revised document is then again sent to the MFP Supervisor for approval. The BGU Technical Reader should not be confused with the candidate's own hired editor or proofreader. Fees for these service providers are the candidate's personal financial obligation. The Technical Reader fee is \$150; however, projects over 75 pages may incur extra fees.

MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Identifying Master's Final Project Supervisor

Before candidates can begin their MFP, Dr. Yvonne McKenzie, MATL Program Director, must approve the candidate's choice of MFP Supervisor. The candidate may also review the list of current faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) or advisors in the most recent academic catalog, since they are all generally approved as BGU adjunct faculty members. If the candidate's desired MFP Supervisor is not currently listed in the academic catalog, the candidate should arrange for the potential supervisor's vita to be submitted to the Dr. McKenzie for approval.

Requirements and Expectations of Master's Final Project Supervisor

MFP Supervisors are required to have a terminal (doctoral-level) degree and are expected to be familiar with the requirements of mentoring graduate-level candidates. The MFP Supervisor is responsible for guiding the candidate through all phases of the MFP, articulating the program and institutional standards, and serving as the primary reader for both content and writing style. The MFP Supervisor will be required to sign a Master's Final Project Supervisor Contract, which will be sent directly to the MFP supervisor. The supervisor should sign and return the contract along with a vita and a signed W9 form or banking information if an

international professor. No payment will be issued to the MFP Supervisor until these documents have been received and the candidate has paid the MFP tuition.

Communication Issues with Master's Final Project Supervisors

It is important that the candidate and MFP Supervisor understand the expectations for how each will contribute to and facilitate various working relationships, including the roles of other readers, editors, and proofreaders. Below are some suggestions and guidelines for building an effective relationship between the candidate and MFP Supervisor.

- Agree on reasonable and clearly defined time frames for the candidate to submit work in sections or chapters to the MFP Supervisor and for the supervisor's responses (the supervisor should respond with written instructions).
- Identify standards for the evaluation and revision process, including references to comments and recommendations received from the research independent study course professors.
- Discuss shared expectations for interacting with the hired editors and proofreaders.

Candidate will work with their MFP Supervisor to determine the right interaction pattern and schedule required for effective project development. Given the specific demands associated with each project, the MFP Supervisor and the candidate have freedom to determine their meeting schedule. Meetings can be face-to-face, by email, by Zoom or any other means of communication. If for any reason the candidate or MFP Supervisor experiences repeated difficulties in keeping agreed upon schedules or other problems in the working relationship, the Graduation Coordinator/Registrar should be contacted. Candidates and MFP Supervisors are strongly encouraged to keep a work record of the meetings and correspondence to facilitate communication and a productive workflow.

Essential Questions Supervisors Should Ask Candidates

Candidate and MFP Supervisor should be aware of several basic standards by which all BGU projects will be evaluated in the Oral Review process. The following questions address these project standards and should guide the candidate and the MFP Supervisor throughout the MFP development process:

- Does the project address how Transformational Leadership principles can be specifically employed within the candidates own sphere of influence?
- Does the project clearly define the scope, limits, schedules, and funding sources needed to protect the project from over-expectations and reduced effectiveness?
- Does the project include a practical implementation plan to solve a problem or address an opportunity in an organization, community, or church body with clearly defined goals and strategies?
- Does the project include a well-developed research design approach for collecting data that is relevant to the projects goals and implementation strategies?
- Does the project include a clearly defined evaluation process to determine how well the project accomplishes the desire results?

- Does the project contain a specific cultural-social analysis of the context in which the project plan is to be implemented?
- Does the project clearly define the candidate's role in working with individuals and communities?
- Does the project reflect personal transformation and growth in the candidate's ability to exercise transformational, incarnational leadership?
- Does the project articulate a relevant theological and biblical foundation?
- Does the project contain new insights, findings, research outcomes, or other knowledge about Transformational Leadership that will benefit other professional Christian leaders?
- Does the project writing follow APA standards, including the correct use of reference materials, resource documents, and other bibliographic sources?
- Does the project show a logical organizational structure within each chapter with a consistent subheading structure?
- Does the final document represent a level of editorial competence that meets acceptable publication standards?
- If the student chooses to utilize an alternative format, the same principles listed above apply with style adjustments as noted in the Project Options section of this handbook.

While the types of issues discussed above may need to be context-specific, the assessment of *all* projects will be guided by the standards reflected in these questions and the MFP Supervisor should evaluate the candidate's work guided by these standards.

PERSONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

Candidates are required to identify a Personal Learning Community (PLC) prior to being considered for acceptance into BGU (see the student catalog). This group is comprised of three to five significant people within the candidate's work or ministry environment. They provide moral and spiritual support and a collaborative learning opportunity for the candidate throughout his or her learning experience at BGU. The student's PLC is committed to read the project paper for each course, to pray regularly for the student, and to meet four times a year to provide encouragement and strategic direction. Some of these meetings may involve a BGU program director or faculty member facilitating the conversation. Regarding the MFP, the PLC should assist the candidate in effectively relating the project to the candidate's work or ministry context and providing networking opportunities relevant to the project. They often connect the candidate with valuable community resources and key personnel who may be essential for the project to move forward. Regarding the MFP, the PLC's responsibilities include:

- evaluating the candidate's work or ministry context to determine an appropriate MFP that addresses a real need,
- assisting in guiding the candidate in design, implementation, and evaluation of the MFP; and
- reading the whole MFP and providing valuable input regarding its relevance and workability in addressing the stated problem or opportunity

Since the PLC is committed to read the project papers for each of the candidate's courses throughout the BGU learning experience, they will be familiar with the development of the project and with items that have informed the MFP during the candidate's course of study. Many will also be stakeholders of the MFP. The candidate is encouraged to continue to involve the PLC throughout the entire MFP process.

MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT FORMAT OPTIONS

MFP 601A – MASTER'S FINAL PROJECT

Purpose

The purpose of this culmination course is to review and integrate your personal and leadership responsibilities during your time at BGU, in order to apply what you have gained to your current and future direction, and to document the personal and leadership development gained through your degree program with your personal work responsibilities.

Desired Learning Outcomes

Upon successfully completing this project, you should have mastery and demonstrate an understanding of the following:

1. **Spiritual Formation:** Assess how God is working in your life and your relationships with the community. Articulate the biblical foundations supporting your values and life principles and those you use in your organization or ministry.
2. **Perspectives:** Critically appraise how transformational leadership has deepened your understanding of God's calling on your life and work.
3. **Knowledge:** Determine the direction of your growth in understanding how to steward your entrepreneurial, innovative, and initiative-taking leadership skills within their local context and globally.
4. **Skills:** Critically assess your ethical and managerial practices based on a contextualized biblical worldview.
5. **Application:** Analyze and address challenges in urban areas while building community. Propose, adopt, or implementing ethical practices in transformational leadership within your organization.

Elements of the MFP

The MFP will consist of a 40- to 45-page paper for 3 credits or 80 pages for 6 credits. Before beginning your project, identify a MFP supervisor, who must be approved by Dr. Yvonne McKenzie, the MATL Program Director.

Once you have identified a supervisor, begin a **formatting process** so you can effectively communicate your story to your friends and fellow workers. What is your organizing purpose? Who is your audience to whom you are writing? Will you organize your paper around the eight principles of Transformational leadership? Or will it be around your personal transformation, knowing that a transformational leader first needs to be transformed to lead others in a transformational process? Or could the paper be organized (formatted) around a brand-new understanding of what the term Urban Transformation includes? Or maybe it could be around the idea of the changes you have been able to make in your current ministry, resulting in each of these courses. Or it could be something entirely different, but you get the idea...find the organizing principle.

As you begin to write, think of the **flow** of the paper. You will be integrating into the paper concepts from your reading, lectures, discussions, and projects, which will need to be referenced to meet the standards of APA (there is a template) for creating Contents, Chapters, References, etc. Your Master's Final Project is not just a research paper or even a thesis on some particular leadership aspect. Picture this as a small river growing in size, power, and potential as each of the tributaries (individual classes) added to the body of knowledge. But make sure you keep in mind to whom you are writing. How is this growing river to impact them? What is it that you want your audience to think or see, or even do as they engage in the story you are writing? Is your paper flowing to that end?

The written final project should contain the following elements:

1. **Introduction: Remember** where you were on your journey when you began your study at BGU. What prompted you to engage in your study at BGU? What were the strengths you were bringing into the program? What were your felt needs and personal aspirations or expectations you had for your time at BGU? What was your first love that motivated you to study here?
2. **Chapter 1-Courses:** Take the time to *review* each course you took in the MATL program; the journals you wrote, the projects you have written, and the professors you encountered. What parts of these courses stimulated you the most that not only began to help you understand transformation but also met or began to shape your expectations of Urban Leadership? In essence, assess yourself, and see what happened in each course that shaped your current understanding and brought direction for your future.
3. **Chapter 2-Literature Review:** *Reflect* or meditate on what you discovered in a way that begins to connect the dots of what God has done in you and through you in your master's program in the books and articles you have read.
4. **Chapter 3-Mentors/PLC:** As you have taken this educational journey, what mentors or PLC members have impacted this learning experience? *Reflect* on their impact and how they contributed to your growth.
5. **Chapter 4-Transformational Leadership:** Finally, *focus* on the eight perspectives of transformational leadership and how you want to apply what you have mastered in the next 3-5 years? (That might be in your personal life, family relationships, church ministries, work opportunities, or community partnerships?) Another way of thinking about this is while you are celebrating what you have learned, you are using this paper to launch you forward to a

new tomorrow. What is it that you want to do? Who do you want to be with you as you do it? How will the things you learned guide you as you implement that dream in the days ahead?

MFP 601B – PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY

Description

The Philosophy of Ministry project is similar to the MFP601a, except the concluding chapter will pull together the courses, books, mentors, and experiences into your own philosophy of what you feel God has called you to be and do in ministry.

Purpose

The student who wishes to develop their philosophy of ministry may use this option for their MFP. It is the objective of this course to help you integrate your spiritual journey, leadership experiences, academic achievement, and book reviews into a project that may become a working document for lifelong learning. The written work will be evaluated for integration of life and ministry, creative expression and scholarship.

Desired Learning Outcomes

Upon successfully completing this project, you should have mastery and demonstrate an understanding of the following:

1. **Spiritual Formation:** Assess how God is working in your life and your relationships with the community. Articulate the biblical foundations supporting your values, life principles, organization or ministry.
2. **Perspectives:** Critically appraise how transformational leadership has deepened your understanding of God's calling on your life and work.
3. **Knowledge:** Determine the direction of your growth in understanding how to steward your entrepreneurial, innovative, and initiative-taking leadership skills within your local context and globally.
4. **Skills:** Critically analyze the significant academic and life experiences that contributed to your present understanding of theology, spirituality, and ministry practice.
5. **Application:** Submit a Master's Final Project document, which will serve as a synthesis of your present theological and philosophical positions. The result should be a working document useful for further exploration and integration.

Project Elements

Literature Reviews Chapter 1 <i>25% of final grade</i>	(a) Select 15, 20, or 30 books (depending on the number of credits for this project) that have made a significant contribution to your life, ministry, and philosophy.
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3-credits=15 pages 4-credits=20 pages 6-credits=30 pages	(b) In the first sentence of your review, identify the title and author (with a footnote and appropriate reference), noting the circumstance in which the book was read. (c) Follow with a discussion about how this book contributed to your philosophy of life/ministry and specific applications of the book to your life and ministry. Each review should be 1-page in length.
Reflection Paper Chapter 2 <i>35% of final grade</i> 3-credits=20 pages 4-credits=30 pages 6-credits=40 pages	• Identify 3, 4, or 6 (depending on the number of credits for this project) life circumstances that have contributed significantly to your spiritual and leadership formation. Summarize the major life lesson from your experience. • Identify 3, 4, or 6 (depending on the number of credits for this project) living or historical mentors who have contributed significantly to your spiritual and leadership formation. Summarize the vital life lesson developed through your relationship with each mentor.
	□ For each of these life circumstances and/or mentors, reflect on how your circumstance or encounter with the person or event affected your life, what happened, and how you were influenced. □ Summarize each encounter into a single Life Lesson or Personal Proverb. Conclude this section with a list of these summary statements.
Philosophy of Ministry Chapter 3 <i>25% of final grade</i> 3-credits=15 pages 4-credits=20 pages 6-credits=30 pages	• Write a summary of the critical theological principles that presently guide your life and priorities in ministry. Key themes MUST include but are not limited to God, Salvation, Church, Mission, and Bible. • Identify major ministry themes that flow out of your theological positions as they relate to your mission and calling. • Be sure to include an introduction and conclusion to this section that helps capture the essence of your philosophy of ministry.
PLC Review Chapter 4 <i>15% of Grade</i> 3-credits=5 pages 4-credits=10 pages 6-credits=15 pages	• Reflect on the input you received from your Personal Learning Community, noting how they helped you refine your document. • Look for consistency between what you have written and what your PLC knows about you. What clarifications need to be incorporated into the final project? • Evaluate your learning process for this project. Include suggestions for further study and how you hope to use this paper in the future.
Bonus Opportunity	• Students may wish to refer to papers written for other classes in this project. Those papers may be referenced and attached in the document as an appendix.

Creativity Options	• Students may choose to write the project in either chronological order or in the categories listed above. Book reports, Experiences, Mentors, and Theology must be clearly identified as such. • The writing style should reflect the group of people who will be reading the work. • The use of photographs or other graphic expressions are encouraged, but they should be compressed before inserting. • Samples may be made available upon request.
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THS 650 - THESIS

The Thesis project is similar to a doctoral student's dissertation.

Proposal

The candidate and the Supervisor refine the draft Thesis Proposal and produce a final proposal. After the Thesis Supervisor approves the document, it is submitted to the Registrar for approval by the AC. Once the Thesis Proposal is approved, any other changes to the proposal must be approved by the Academic Dean (major changes may need AC approval also). It will be assumed that the Thesis will be implemented and reported in accordance with the proposal unless approval is requested for revisions. The Thesis Proposal is to be 15-20 pages in length and includes the following elements (a template for the Thesis Proposal is available at the BGU website or from the Registrar).

Thesis Proposal Elements

Title Page

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

- *Statement of the problem:*
The problem statement section describes a problem or opportunity related to the candidate's work or ministry context. This statement is developed during the Project Design Methodology course and provides the foundation for every other chapter in the Thesis Proposal and the Thesis.
- *Statement of purpose:*
The purpose statement describes the significance of the Thesis as it relates to the problem or ministry opportunity and how the project intends to address the issue. All projects should have the goal of facilitating positive transformation in the lives of people and their environments. The purpose statement should contain a brief summary of the data gathering methods and project application to be implemented through the Thesis process. The research methods and application are then described in more detail later in the methodology chapter of the proposal.

- *Definitions of key words and terms:*
Include keywords and terms that you may be using in a particular manner. Do not describe words used in everyday language that you can assume your reader knows. Focus on terms you will use in a specific manner within your title, problem statement, or those to be used extensively throughout the project.
- *Audience:*
Describe the intended readers of your thesis. Will your readers include members of a specific neighborhood community, business or other organizational colleagues, members of a local/regional/national church, members of a specific demographic community, or other groups you can identify? Keep this audience in mind as you write the thesis.
- *Stakeholders:*
Describe those people or organizations that have a vested interest in this project, including those who will benefit and possibly those who will contribute content expertise, access to information, and other resources.
- *Integration with various dimensions of transformational leadership:*
Describe how the project demonstrates and promotes some or all of the eight perspectives of Transformational Leadership as taught at BGU.²
- *Scope and limitations:*
Your project cannot address every conceivable angle or approach to your problem statement. You may be focusing selected aspects of the problem you have chosen to address. Also discuss any limitations you foresee such as limited sample sizes, inaccessible data, uncontrolled variables, etc. Limitations may be difficult to foresee at the proposal stage, but try to anticipate issues beforehand as much as possible.)

Chapter 2: Context of the Thesis Project

- *Historical background:*
This section addresses issues such as the geographic location of the problem, demographic/ethnographic descriptions, historical factors that have contributed to the problem, and possibly previous attempts to address the problem.
- *Current situation:*
Describe the situation as it exists today. Who are the people being affected? How are they being affected? What factors are contributing to the ongoing existence of this issue? What has been done about the issue to date, and what groups, if any, are currently trying to address the issue? How are you personally involved?
- *Relevant personal, community, organizational, congregational, and global issues:*
How is the problem you are addressing affecting various areas of life and/or organizational structures. Topic samples might include community economics,

² Transformational Leadership includes the leadership attributes of calling-based; incarnational; reflective; servanthood; contextual; prophetic; shalom-oriented; and global.

inequalities, gentrification, upheavals in organizational structures, hindrances to congregational growth, similar types of problems around the world, and how the problem may be affecting you personally. If appropriate, this section could be written as a separate section or included in the Current Situation section.

- *Description of how the project will help to transform, revitalize, enlarge, extend, or multiply a particular aspect of a community, an organization, a church structure, or some other aspect of the candidate's work or other ministries involvement:*

Provide a general summary of how your project will possibly transform a specific aspect of the environmental context of your work or other ministries. Are you suggesting a completely new approach? Do you have ideas for revising former approaches to the problem? Have you gained some new insights or learned new principles that will improve how specific organizational procedures or aspects of ministry are accomplished?

Chapter 3: Literature Review (Other Possible Solutions for the Problem)

Review a minimum of three books in light of the problem statement. This review is not a book "report," but rather, an analysis of the author's solutions to the problem, how your own solutions compare, and how this source will be used to assist your thesis development.

Chapter 4: Biblical and Theological Basis for the Project

Define the roots from which the project grows, i.e. its biblical/theological basis. The proposal chapter should include several theological themes relevant to the problem and purpose statements of the project with a brief description for each. In the actual thesis, you will need to develop these themes through sound biblical exegesis devoid of "proof-texting."

Chapter 5: Project Design and Research Methodology

- Describe the specific goals and implementation plan for the project.
- Identify specific research methods you plan to use to gather data relevant for the problem being addressed (see table 1 earlier in this chapter for a sample of possible research methods). If a questionnaire is going to be used, candidates need to cite sample questions that might be used to gather data.
- Identify participant samples you plan to involve in your research, including sample sizes and demographic information regarding the potential participants.
- Describe the process you plan to use to address the stated problem or opportunity as well as the means you will use to evaluate the effectiveness of the planned strategy.

Chapter 6: Desired Outcome

Describe in detail the desired outcome for this project. How do you anticipate your planned strategy will help to create positive changes in people and their environments?

Chapter 7: Project Outline, Schedule, and Future Vision for Project

Include in this chapter the 1) anticipated work schedule for tasks related to the project; 2) preliminary chapter outline of the MFP, including first and second level subheadings for each of the chapters; and 3) future vision for use of the project.

Bibliography

Provide 30-50 sources that you anticipate using for the research and development of the Thesis.

Required Elements of the Thesis Project

The specific content for the Thesis is contextualized to the candidate's specific degree program as previously described in the Thesis options for the master's degrees. The chapter outline shown below provides a general framework for chapter titles and organization. Generally, the Introduction chapter of the Thesis Proposal can be used for much of the Introduction chapter in the Thesis. Remember to change sentences to past tense since Thesis describes what you have done rather than what you *will* do as in the proposal. The chapter titles may be changed from the outline below to fit unique cases, but the basic content should be relatively similar. The MFP is to be 75 pages in total length (not including front matter pages, appendices, bibliography, and vita). *If the candidate chooses to write a thesis that exceeds 75 pages of text, there will be an additional \$5.00 per page charge to cover the additional cost of the technical reading.* The chapter outline below is to be generally followed, but the specific final project options previously discussed for the master's programs should also be thoroughly reviewed for the project report content.

Title Page

Copyright page (includes copyright and primary biblical text that is referenced in project.)

Signature page (provided by BGU)

Dedication page (if applicable)

Epigraph (a pertinent quote or Scripture, if applicable)

Table of Contents (required and can be generated by Word and then formatted according to APA standards).

List of figures or illustrations (if applicable)

List of tables (if applicable)

Preface and acknowledgements (if applicable)

List of abbreviations (if the project includes many organizational or technical abbreviations)

Glossary (if the project includes many technical terms)

Abstract (brief summary of the project, including the scope, limitations, and summary of conclusions in 300 words or less). See appendix 1 for a sample abstract.

Chapter 1: Introduction (*see the MFP Proposal for section descriptions*)

- Statement of the Problem
- Statement of the Purpose
- Definitions of Key Words and Terms
- Audience
- Stakeholders
- Integration with Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

- Scope and Limitations

Chapter 2: Context of Ministry Problem

- Historical background
- Geographical descriptions and demographic statistics
- Current situations or issues that shed light on the context
- Relevant personal, congregational, community, and global issues
- How the project would help to transform, revitalize, enlarge, extend, or multiply a particular aspect of Christian ministry

Chapter 3: Literature Review (or “Other Possible Solutions for Ministry Problem”)

- Include a minimum of 10-15 books reviewed in light of the problem statement.
- This section is different than a book report for a class. Analyze the author’s solutions to your problem and how they compare to your own proposed solutions. Identify how the source helped in the development of your project.
- Organize according to topics pertaining to the designated field of study. (Do not use the title of the books as subheadings.)
- Combine biblical, theological, ecclesiastical, historical, sociological, and psychological sources.

Chapter 4: Biblical and Theological Basis of Ministry Problem

- Define the theological roots from which the project grew.
- Using the themes developed in the MFP Proposal, discuss biblical issues and theological doctrines related to the study.
- Do not use “proof-texting,” but present a comprehensive and careful exegesis of the texts chosen.
- Show relationships between the biblical texts and development of the project.

Chapter 5: Project Design and Research Methodology

(This chapter should be contextualized in terms of the previously described MFP options for master’s degree candidates)

- Discuss the research methods used to collect data for the project, exactly how they were implemented, and how the data was analyzed (see table 1 on page 3 for a sample of research methods).
- Provide information on the participants in the research instruments used to gather data (age ranges, gender, socio-economic issues, how selected, etc.).
- Describe in detail the plan implemented in the project (objectives, the content of sessions or other activities conducted, the time frame, etc.).
- Discuss the evaluation methodology used to determine the effectiveness of the implementation plan (use of questionnaires, interviews, how you determined if objectives met, etc.).
- Discuss the media piece if using the alternative approach.

Chapter 6. Outcomes and Results

- Provide a detailed discussion analyzing the collected data and how you determined if the data accurately reflected the actual thoughts of the participants. Methods such as “triangulation” are often used to evaluate the accuracy of responses by comparing the

written or verbal participant responses with other validation means such as the researcher's own observations, documents related to the problem being addressed, other expert consultants, and other community resources.

- Summarize what you learned from your analysis of the data and how it compared to what you anticipated.
- Describe the implementation of the ministry application. How did the results of the implementation plan compare to what you anticipated? Discuss how you evaluated the effectiveness of the plan in relation to your stated objectives.

Chapter 7. Conclusions and Implications

- Summarize professional and personal principles learned through the project.
- Discuss the sustainability of the project outcomes for the future.
- Include applications to other similar organizations, ministries, and communities.
- Make recommendations for the future based on what you discovered through the project. Also include questions still not answered.
- Discuss how your Personal Learning Community (PLC) was involved in the project.
- Include any other final conclusions you would like to discuss.

References: Include all of the books, periodicals, Internet sites, and other sources cited or consulted (at least fifty sources).

Appendices (if applicable)

Vita (optional): If, due to confidentiality concerns, you do not wish to include this page it may be eliminated. However, your reader may wish to know more about your history, where you are from, etc. You may include the vita but not include your address, phone, email, etc., unless you wish to provide it.

Thesis Development

The preparation of the thesis is the summation of the candidate's work and must be of high quality and worthy of publication. From the very first draft of the thesis to the final manuscript, the document is to be written in good English grammar and sentence structure, and in accordance with APA standards. Proper documentation must be included for all statistics, graphs, tables, direct quotations, and summarized opinions of other authors. Broad generalizations and opinions without proper documentation will not be accepted. Cited documentation is to conform to the writing format selected for the thesis. Scripture references are placed in the body text of the thesis, not rendered as a footnote. Projects that do not meet these minimal writing standards will be returned to the candidate to be rewritten before the BGU Technical Reader completes a review of the first draft. The project must also be approved by Thesis Supervisor and the Second Reader before it is submitted to the Technical Reader via the Registrar.

Revision of Penultimate Draft

Once the MFP Supervisor has approved the penultimate draft (the draft right before the *final* draft), the Registrar's Office will then review the draft for conformity to BGU standards. The

project will be returned to the candidate if there are necessary revisions. All required revisions must be made before the penultimate draft can be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

When the penultimate draft is submitted to the Registrar's Office, it will be emailed to the Technical Reader, who is appointed to this task by BGU. The Technical Reader fee is in addition to the graduation fee. The Technical Reader will mark the document wherever it fails to conform to APA standards. This document, which has been marked by the Technical Reader, should be submitted by the candidate to the Registrar's Office to ensure accountability for the revisions.

Final Draft of Master's Final Project

Once the final revisions are completed, the candidate will send a copy to each member participating in their Oral Review to read prior to the Scheduled Oral Review. Once the candidate has made any final changes recommended by the Oral Review Committee and it has been approved by the MFP Supervisor, the final manuscript of the MFP should be emailed to the Graduation Coordinator in Word format.

Oral Review

The Oral Review (OR) is an optional final assessment process for the MFP option. After the candidate's MFP Supervisor has determined that the MFP has been well-designed and well-implemented, the supervisor is to grant approval for the candidate to schedule the OR.

Before the OR can be scheduled, the MFP Supervisor must notify the Registrar and confirm that the MFP is at a point for the candidate to proceed with the OR process. The candidate must have made all changes recommended by the MFP Supervisor and the Second Reader (if there is one). The date of the OR will be set by mutual consent of the candidate and the members of the ORC.

Oral Review Scheduling Process

Below is a summary of the OR scheduling process.

1. Candidate forwards final draft to Registrar once it has been approved by his/her MFP Supervisor and the Second Reader (candidate has made all changes recommended by the hired Editor).
2. Registrar emails OR scheduling form to candidate, who is to contact Registrar to determine available dates for a BGU Representative to participate in the OR.
4. Candidate is responsible for contacting MFP Supervisor, Second Reader, Personal Learning Community (PLC), and others who may attend the OR to identify a final date. This information is communicated back to Registrar using the OR scheduling form, tracking any changes in this form by either using the "Track Changes" feature or highlighting changes.
5. Candidate submits final OR scheduling form to Registrar, who will set up a conference call, and email dial-in instructions to OR participants. The BGU Rep is the "coordinator" for the phone conference unless the Rep requests a different arrangement.
6. Candidate sends a copy of MFP draft to members of the ORC no less than one week before the OR date (use an email attachment or hardcopy). If possible, this draft should include

revisions based on Technical Reader recommendations, but scheduling issues may mean the ORC receives a draft copy that does not yet reflect these revisions.

7. Registrar emails Oral Review Form to all OR participants approximately ten days before the scheduled Oral Review date, including reminder to candidate that the MFP draft must be distributed to the ORC at least one week prior to the OR.
8. Immediately following the OR, the MFP Supervisor is to fill out the Oral Review Form summarizing the OR conference and return it to the Registrar. The other ORC members also sign the Oral Review Form indicating their approval of the summarization. If participants are remotely located, the Registrar may circulate the Oral Review Form as an email attachment or a hardcopy in order to obtain all ORC members' signatures.

Components of the Oral Review

The BGU Representative will facilitate the OR or make arrangements for another ORC member to lead the conference. The first component of the OR will be a 15- to 20-minute presentation by the candidate, which should include the following topics.

1. What was the specific project issue/problem addressed?
2. What was the contextual historical and current background for the project?
3. Who was the audience for the project report?
4. What was the candidate's personal role in addressing the project problem?
5. What was the implemented plan to address the problem and how was it evaluated?
6. What sources contributed to the research and implementation of the project?
(literature, Bible/theology, ethnography/sociology/demography, courses, interviews ...)
7. What transformational changes occurred as a result of the project?
(personal, organizational, congregational, community, ministry, etc.)
8. What did the candidate learn from the project?
9. How did the candidate see him/herself as a transformational, incarnational change agent?
10. How can the principles learned be applied to other similar situations?

NOTE: The candidate's presentation should not exceed twenty minutes (fifteen minutes is preferred). This limit will allow another forty to forty-five minutes for discussion. It is strongly recommended that the candidate should quickly cover the first five items above and then spend most of the time covering the remaining items.

Oral Review Board Deliberation, Vote, and Report

It is anticipated that the presentation and questions phase of the OR will require approximately one hour, after which the candidate will be excused. The ORC will then receive input from the candidate's PLC, after which they too will be excused. The ORC will then deliberate and vote on the level achieved by the candidate. The three voting members are the MFP Supervisor, Second Reader, and BGU Representative. Once a vote has been taken, the candidate will be called back to receive the report of the ORC and to respond to other inquiries. Two votes of approval are required to "Pass" and three votes are required if the motion is to "Pass with Distinction." In its deliberations, the oral review committee considers the following criteria:

1. **Pass:** Good competence, satisfactory implementation, comprehension, writing skills, and oral review. May require minor revisions to the final document, which must be reviewed and approved by the MFP Supervisor prior to graduation.

2. **Conditional Pass:** Significant changes in substance and/or style required. Revisions must be reviewed and approved by the MFP Supervisor prior to graduation.
3. **Fail:** competence in either the project preparation or its Oral Review. The candidate may, with the written permission of the Oral Review Board, work with the MFP Supervisor to determine the appropriate corrective action. Without the written permission of the Oral Review Board, the candidate will be recommended for termination.

Oral Review Follow-Up

It will be the responsibility of the supervisor to:

1. Make sure that any changes required by the ORC are incorporated into the candidate's Thesis.
2. Complete the Oral Review Evaluation form, sign, and return it to the Registrar for filing in the candidate's permanent file.
3. Provide the Registrar with an electronic signature via email that can be inserted into the Thesis signature page. If the supervisor is uncomfortable providing an electronic signature, he/she must print out two copies of the Thesis signature page on bright-white, acid-free, 24 lb. paper on a color printer, sign it, and mail to the Registrar in a cardboard envelope that cannot be bent so that it can be inserted into the two Thesis documents for binding.

APPROVAL AND RECOMMENDATION FOR GRADUATION

Once all course work with the exception of the MFP/Thesis has been completed, the candidate will be recommended to BGU's Academic Cabinet (AC) to be advanced to "Candidacy Status." In its meeting prior to graduation each year, the Board of Directors also approves all candidates for graduation. Graduation activities are generally held the first weekend of June. All graduation candidates are encouraged to attend the graduation activities unless extenuating circumstances prevent such attendance. The graduate's diploma and an official transcript will be presented to graduates during the graduation activities if the MFP has been submitted in a timely manner. The graduate will also be "hooded" during the ceremony. Details about graduation will be sent to candidates in the months preceding graduation.

If a grade is missing on the candidate's transcript or the MFP has not been completed, the diploma will not be awarded (the award cover will be empty when presented to the candidate) but will be mailed to the candidate once a passing grade has been awarded. If there is a balance on the student's account, the diploma and final transcript will be held until the balance is paid in full.

COMMON WRITING ISSUES

All written materials related to the MFP must conform to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Edition). In addition, the candidate is urged to consult a manual on English usage and style, such as *The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White. Citing references is to conform to the APA standards.

The candidate is to secure the help of an editor and/or a proofreader to provide assistance in preparing the draft copy to be sent to the supervisor. The proofreader and/or the editor should read this draft copy of the MFP and the candidate is to make the recommended revisions before

the document is sent to the MFP Supervisor and the BGU Technical Reader, who are *not* expected to function as proofreaders or editors for the project in terms of punctuation, typographical errors, and grammar. Some help for this task may be available for qualified two-third world students. Check with the Registrar.

Each MFP is unique. There are, however, some fundamental elements of structure, grammar, and formatting that are common to all graduate projects. Anticipating common errors when writing the first draft can eliminate much rewriting. The following sections list common errors, which must be considered beginning with the first draft of the project. Candidates should try to write with an attitude that shows that they are presenting just one possible constructive idea or suggestion without bashing those who have taken another stance. Respect is key!

NONDISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE

BGU is firm in its commitment to the equality of women and men of every race and ethnic background and strictly enforces respect and reverence for all persons regardless of age, economic status, ethnicity, gender, race, and other forms of marginalization. The university requires all members of the community, board, administration, faculty, staff, and candidates to use language that exemplifies equality in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in writing. Therefore, candidates are expected to strive for accurate, unbiased communication and avoid debasing terms, stereotypes, and oppressive language within their MFP. Candidates are strongly encouraged to read *Guidelines for Bias-Free Writing* by Marilyn Schwartz before they start to write their projects. The book *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach for Doctor of Ministry Theses* by Tim Sensing (2023) also contains excellent guidelines for unbiased communication.

Candidates are responsible for obtaining permission to quote published sources, providing accurately quoted material, ensuring there are complete and detailed references, and addressing any other matters related to the final written format and production of the MFP. As has been previously emphasized, the candidate must follow the writing standards of APA7 formatting.

EDITOR

Once the candidate has completed the first draft of the MFP and received final approval from the MFP Supervisor and Second Reader, an editor who is familiar with academic editorial preferences should be hired to edit the project. Securing a good editor is critical to ensure that the project has a quality of content and style worthy of publication. Remuneration for the editor is the responsibility of the candidate. International candidates for whom English is their second language are encouraged to hire an editor for whom English is their first language to ensure correction of common grammatical errors. It is also essential that the editor be familiar with APA7 formatting. The Technical Reader may return the document without reading it if it is obvious that candidates have not followed the standards of their selected writing format.

PROOFREADING

A good proofreader is also a critical asset to the overall presentation of the final document. Many editors are also good proofreaders. However, the candidate is advised not to use his or her editor as the final proofreader but to select someone who is unfamiliar with the project document. The proofreader should also assess the MFP in terms of bias-free communication,

which is an essential requirement for all BGU MFP (see standards previously described under Nondiscriminatory Language).

Given the availability of computer technology, it is expected that candidates will avail themselves of the appropriate technology required for producing a first-rate written product. The quality of the work should reflect attention to writing techniques such as grammar, spelling, content, and style. The quality of content and selection of style must be worthy of publication. Minimally it will be listed in MFP abstracts and will likely be drawn upon by future BGU candidates, as well as other candidates who are studying Christian leadership.

STRUCTURAL ISSUES

The following issues will often require candidates to do further work on their MFP:

1. Lack of detail in Table of Contents (provide at least first level subheadings).
2. A weak introduction chapter which does not clearly state the problem and purpose of the project and how each component will contribute to the overall purpose (see the typical components of the introductory chapter previously discussed).
3. No introductions to chapters (introductory paragraphs are needed to prepare the reader for the content of the chapter and how it fits with the whole project).
4. No conclusion or summaries for each chapter, which should summarize the major ideas of the chapter and demonstrate how the chapter contributes to the overall purpose of the project.
5. No final conclusion and recommendations section (a summary and conclusions chapter that brings all the project components together and shows that the purpose of the project has been demonstrated).
6. A lack of a focused arguments or a clear themes, which integrates the various sections of the project (for example, a project is not acceptable that simply includes a compilation of good ideas, research results, opinions, or essays with little specificity or overall connection).
7. Too few first-level and second-level subheadings to organize a chapter. A sufficient number of subheadings are needed to break up long sections of chapters and to provide clarity for the reader. A consistent, logical formatting must be developed to identify first- and second-level subheadings throughout the chapters (see the BGU MFP template for recommended subheading formats).
8. Superfluous material in various chapters, which does not contribute directly to the thought that is being developed.
9. No specific plan for evaluating how well the project accomplished its intended outcomes.
10. Generalizations or personal opinions without well-documented and logical conclusions drawn from the research.
11. Arrogant writing suggesting candidate has discovered the missing solutions for the church.

12. Too many long block quotes, without much connecting discussion. The project must be composed of logical prose text, unified by a common purpose with appropriate documentation. When a block quote is used, a thorough commentary must follow the quote showing how it relates to and supports the point being addressed. Also, the project should not be a series of shorter quotes following one after the other with little connecting discussion.
13. Use of copyrighted figures without permission. Show permission in the source documenting caption of the figure.
14. Plagiarism violations through the use of opinions, phrases, or concepts without proper documentation.
15. Failure of the candidate to demonstrate critical thinking and integrative writing leading to well-thought-out conclusions based on the representative data presented in the project.

GRAMMAR AND FORMATTING ISSUES

BGU has created a Student Handbook that contains a multitude of helpful hints on grammar and formatting issues. It is hoped that by the time you have reached this stage of your educational journey with BGU, that you have availed yourself of this resource. BGU has also provided paper templates and APA7 reference samples that are accessible in the BGU Populi online library.

DEADLINES

For June graduation:

2025 Deadlines	Task
Jan 1	Registered for either Master's Final Project/Thesis or Capstone
Mar 31	First draft to supervisor for approval
Apr 1	Email photos of: 1) Grad; 2) Grad's work/ministry context; and 3) Grad with family
Apr 1	Measurements to Graduation Coordinator's Office for cap and gown
Apr 15	Schedule Oral Review through Graduation Coordinator's Office (if doing the oral presentation)
Apr 30	All coursework and final project must be completed by this date

May 1	Final draft of Final Project to Graduation Coordinator's Office in Word format for final edits
May 1	All financial obligations must be paid in full by this date
May 15	Submit self-evaluation and have PLC members fill out the PLC Evaluation
June	Attend graduation ceremony in Dallas, Texas, USA on first Saturday in June – celebrate!

2025 Deadlines	Additional Tasks
Apr 1	Email photos of: 1) Grad; 2) Grad's work/ministry context; and 3) Grad with family
Apr 1	Measurements to Graduation Coordinator's Office for cap and gown
June 2025	Attend graduation ceremony in Dallas, Texas, USA on first Saturday in June – celebrate!

APPENDIX 1.

EXAMPLE OF PROJECT ABSTRACT

This project addresses the need for expanded collaborative partnerships among churches in Portland, Oregon in meeting the increasing community needs and how their congregational distinctiveness could hinder or support intentional collaboration. Since leadership provides the infrastructure for transformative action in the community, the project analyzes the attitudes regarding relational cooperation among local congregational leaders to discover those factors that may hinder or support better collaboration for their transformational impact on the community. A qualitative, one-on-one research interview method was used with eleven senior pastors in the Portland area, provided invaluable information on relational unity. The data was analyzed using a Thematic Analysis approach. Literature and attending interactive community meetings were other sources of research data.

The research data clearly showed that leaders have a desire to serve the community, but their responses are more crisis-oriented and reactive rather than being proactive. Congregations unite in prayer and other worship activities, but individually attempt to meet the needs of the community, which leads to duplication of effort and ineffective use of resources. The principal conclusion is that individual and congregational spiritual formation is the primary issue preventing effective intentional collaboration among local congregations in service to the community. Several collaborative endeavors resulted from this project, including the formation of the Center for Women in Ministry (CWM) in association with the and North Portland Bible College.