



# Martin Luther Christian University

Nongrah, Dongkietih, Block-1, Shillong-793006, Meghalaya, India

☎ 0364-2535420, 2535437

e-mail: [admin@mlcuniv.in](mailto:admin@mlcuniv.in), [www.mlcuniv.in](http://www.mlcuniv.in)

**III/DFRTS/Ntn-Th/25/2022**

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## **Notification No: 01/FRTS/MLCU Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies**

### **Rules for the Doctoral Degrees (PhD in Theology, PhD in Christian Studies, Christian Management, Doctor of Ministry and DMin to PhD) 2022**

In terms of Section 22, subsection (2) of the Martin Luther Christian University Act 2005, and with Statute 6.3.1 of the Martin Luther Christian University statutes and Rules 2016, and as per the recommendation of the Academic Council meetings held on July 28, 2021, the following Rules for Doctoral Degrees (PhD in Theology, PhD in Christian Studies, Christian Management, Doctor of Ministry and DMin to PhD) 2022 is being notified:

#### **PREAMBLE:**

The Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies was created by the Board of Governors in its meeting held on 29th March 2019 under the provision of the MLCU Act, 2005, Chapter 2, Section 7 (a) of the MLCU Act, 2005 and Statutes 10.1 of the MLCU Statutes & Rules, 2016.

The University's mission emphasises its mandate to recognise its Christian legacy and its commitment to Christian institutions and the Christian community. Thus, Doctoral Studies in Theology is to enhance leaders' capacity to serve in theological institutions, churches, and society. The university believes that the primary motivation for undertaking research must come from the doctoral candidate. The candidate should have a passion for solving a significant and specific problem. The university will play a prime role in designing the study and the candidate. The supervisor will guide the domain discipline course work and the implementation of the study. The following regulations for doctoral research are made under the relevant Statute of the University and are recommended to the Academic Council.

#### **1. OBJECTIVES OF THE PHD STUDIES**

- a. To enhance knowledge in theological and religious studies and other related disciplines with mastery in an academic field;

- b. To increase awareness and competence in teaching and research in colleges, theological seminaries, and universities, and to instil a commitment to collaborative inquiry, to mentor, publication and other modes of transferring knowledge;
- c. To enhance the church and Christian institutional leadership capacity and build growth in one's ability and dedication to social and theological diversity and its capacity to relate across differences.
- d. To build the capacity to conduct advanced scholarly research and writing that makes an original contribution to the discipline that is significant for religious communities, academies, and society.
- e. To enhance the ability to communicate one's research appropriately to scholars within one's discipline and other scholars, professionals, or the public beyond one's field.

## **2. DEGREE AND DESIGNATION**

The university shall award the PhD in Theology, PhD in Christian Studies, Christian Management and Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree to candidates who satisfactorily complete the requirements in this scheme of regulations. The degree certificate shall indicate the Faculty under which the degree was pursued and mention the thesis title.

## **3. ELIGIBILITY AND DURATION OF THE PROGRAMMES**

### **A. PhD in Theology**

#### **i. Eligibility**

- a. MTh., or its equivalent recognised and approved by the Academic Committee for Theology and Religious Studies.
- b. A Minimum of 2 years of ministerial experiences

#### **ii. Duration**

- a. Minimum duration of two years, as MTh., is recognised as equivalent to MPhil.
- b. The maximum duration shall be six years, extendable to one year only in exceptional circumstances by the Doctoral Committee.
- c. After completing six years and any permitted extension period, the candidate should apply for readmission. Readmission will include the entrance test, the course work, and the fees current at the time of the new application. Such candidates have to petition the Doctoral Committee for approval to re-apply.
- d. The PhD duration shall be counted from the admission date, i.e., the announcement of the entrance test results.
- e. Women candidates may be provided with an extension of the PhD for an additional 240 days. Such scholars who wish to avail this provision will write to the Dean of Research stating the reason.

## **B. PhD in Christian Studies**

### **i. Eligibility**

- a. Postgraduate Degree in any field with B.D/MDiv or bridge course in theology
- b. Minimum two years of experience in ministry or teaching experience.

### **ii. Duration**

- a. Minimum duration of three years.
- b. The maximum duration shall be six years, extendable up to one year only in exceptional circumstances by the Doctoral Committee.
- c. After completing six years and any permitted extension period, the candidate should apply for readmission. Readmission will include the entrance test and the course work, and the fees current at the time of the new application. Such candidates have to petition the Doctoral Committee for approval to re-apply.
- d. The PhD duration shall be counted from the admission date, i.e., the announcement of the entrance test results.
- e. Women candidates may be provided with an extension of the PhD for an additional 240 days. Such scholars who wish to avail this provision will write to the Dean of Research stating the reason.

## **C. PhD in Christian Management Studies**

The world is not in danger of a shortage of resources, but it is at risk of a shortage of faithful stewards. Jesus came to seek, restore, and redeem a broken world. The fundamental principles of PhD in Christian Management are the practice of redemptive stewardship to transform the world with commitment and dedication and faithful to God's resources entrusted to humanity. It aimed at serving the Church management resources and the management of NGOs to be good stewards of the resources.

PhD in Christian Management is:

- a. To enhance advanced thinking and discovery of knowledge in the management of Church managements and NGOs with the Christian principles and practices
- b. To develop skills to conduct scholarly research with adequate skills in current research trends, practices, and implications for future research in Christian management.

### **i. Eligibility**

- a. Master's degree (MA) in Christian Management or its equivalent postgraduate degree from any recognised university or MTh., with a bridge course in management studies and accepted by the ACTRS of MLCU.
- b. MBA or an equivalent degree in management with a bridge course in Biblical and Theological foundations on Christian leadership and stewardship and accepted by the ACTRS of MLCU.

**ii. Duration**

- a. Minimum duration of three years.
- b. The maximum duration shall be six years, extendable up to one year only in exceptional circumstances by the Doctoral Committee.
- c. After completing six years and any permitted extension period, the candidate should apply for readmission. Readmission will include the entrance test and the course work, and the fees current at the time of the new application. Such candidates have to petition the Doctoral Committee for approval to re-apply.
- d. The PhD duration shall be counted from the admission date, i.e., the announcement of the entrance test results.
- e. Women candidates may be provided with an extension of the PhD for an additional 240 days. Such scholars who wish to avail this provision will write to the Dean of Research stating the reason.

**D. Doctor of Ministry (DMin)**

**i. Eligibility**

- a. A BD or MDiv or its equivalent recognised by the Academic Committee of Theology and Religious Studies/Academic Council of Martin Luther Christian University.
- b. Minimum five years of experience in Pastoral ministry.

**ii. Duration**

- a. Minimum duration of three years.
- b. The maximum duration shall be six years, extendable up to one year only in exceptional circumstances by the Doctoral Committee.
- c. After completing six years and any permitted extension period, the candidate should apply for readmission. Readmission will include the entrance test and the course work, and the fees current at the time of the new application. Such candidates have to petition the Doctoral Committee for approval to re-apply.
- d. The PhD duration shall be counted from the admission date, i.e., the announcement of the entrance test results.
- e. Women candidates may be provided with an extension of the PhD for an additional 240 days. Such scholars who wish to avail this provision will write to the Dean of Research stating the reason.

**E. DMin to PhD**

**i. Eligibility**

- a. A DMin Degree from a recognised University/Board approved by the Academic Committee of Theology and Religious Studies.
- b. A minimum of five years of ministerial or teaching experience.

**ii. Duration**

- a. Minimum duration of One year.

- b. The PhD duration shall be counted from the admission date, i.e., the announcement of the entrance test results.
- c. The maximum duration shall be three years, extendable up to one year only in exceptional circumstances by the Doctoral Committee.
- d. After completing three years and any permitted extension period, the candidate should apply for readmission. Readmission will include the entrance test and the course work, and the fees current at the time of the new application. Such candidates have to petition the Doctoral Committee for approval to re-apply.
- e. The PhD duration shall be counted from the admission date, i.e., the announcement of the entrance test results.

#### **4. ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME**

- a. The candidates shall apply to the university in the prescribed form, attaching the required documents and fees. Besides, the candidate shall submit an essay of about 500 words on why the applicant wishes to do a doctoral study for the degree applied and a tentative research proposal of approximately 1500 words with 5 to 10 academic references.

The entrance exam will test the candidates in the following areas.

- English competency
  - Research Methods / Methodological Approaches related to Field of Research.
  - Analytical skills
  - Community Orientation
- b. A candidate shall ordinarily be admitted based on satisfactory performance in the entrance test and the interview. The qualifying marks for the entrance test shall be 50%. Upon being declared successful in the entrance test and interview, the candidate will be admitted to the doctoral study.
  - c. After completing the coursework as prescribed, the candidate should submit a research proposal to the Doctoral Committee in the prescribed format provided in the Manual for PhD in Theology and Christian Studies.
  - d. Suppose a candidate does not satisfactorily complete the prescribed coursework within eighteen months and will have to re-appear and pass the entrance test to continue the PhD study.
  - e. The DMin to the PhD candidate is expected to pursue the research study based on their previous work completed for their DMin degree. Such candidates must obtain approval for their research proposal within three months of admission into the programme to be placed in the regular PhD programme.
  - f. The candidate shall not have simultaneous PhD registration with the other Universities/Institutions.

## 5. FEES

- a. All applicants will submit the application fee along with the filled-in online application form and upload the required documents. On being declared eligible to appear for the entrance test, the candidate will pay the entrance test fee.
- b. Applicants who pass the entrance test and interview shall pay the registration fee and the first-year tuition fees together. After that, the annual course fees shall be payable till the candidates submit their thesis to the university.
- c. On submission of the research proposal, the candidate has to pay the Research Proposal fees.
- d. The annual fees have to be paid till the candidate's results are declared.
- e. Candidates will be required to pay the examination fees along with the submission of the thesis.

## 6. COURSEWORK AND COMPETENCIES

A. *The PhD in Theology* candidates are required to complete the course work as follows:

Sl no.	Specialisation	Credits	Research Paper
1.	Biblical Studies (OT & NT)	12/16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social Scientific and Theological Research.</li> <li>2. Methodological Issues and Current Trends in research in the discipline chosen for investigation.</li> <li>3. Advanced level Language requirements in Greek /Hebrew.</li> <li>4. Third Language (German/Spanish/ French) if needed as per the thesis requirement. (optional)</li> </ol>
2.	Systematic Theology, History of Christianity and Religion/Interfaith studies	12/16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social Scientific and Theological Research.</li> <li>2. Methodological Issues and Current Trends in research in the discipline chosen for investigation.</li> <li>3. Language requirements in Greek /Hebrew/ or any other language as per the research needs.</li> </ol>
3.	Missiology, Christian Counselling, Christian Education and Communication	12/16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Social Scientific and Theological Research.</li> <li>B. Methodological Issues and Current Trends in research in the discipline chosen for investigation.</li> <li>C. Subject-specific assessment paper as prescribed by the supervisor (optional)</li> </ol>

**B. *PhD in Christian Studies***

- a. In the PhD in Christian Studies, students embark on a journey under a Research Supervisor's guidance. They travel through a sequence of milestones to create a project or research that addresses a significant real-world ministry within their ministry context.
- b. The candidates are required to do coursework for 12/16 credits as given below:
  - Social Sciences Research Design and Theological Research Design (4)
  - Methodological Issues and Current Trends in Pastoral Theology/interfaith studies (4)
  - Literature Review or annotated bibliography in the field chosen for research (4) or
  - Area Specific paper for research as suggested by the supervisor (4)

**C. *PhD in Christian Management:***

- a. In PhD in Christian management, students will embark on research under a research supervisor's guidance. It will be a collaborative programme with the department of management of the university and explore a more significant exposure to the global trends in financial management with Christian principles and perspectives. The candidates are required to do coursework for 12/16 credits as given below:
  - Social sciences and theological research designs applicable to management studies (4)
  - Methodological issues and current trends in management studies (4)
  - Literature review in the field of the chosen area of research or
  - Christian Principles and practices of management of resources. (4)

**D. *DMin Coursework***

- a. In the DMin program, students embark on a journey under the guidance of a Research Supervisor. They travel through a sequence of milestones to create a project or research that addresses a significant real-world ministry within their ministry context.
  - The candidates are required to do coursework for 12/16 credits.
  - Social Sciences Research Design and Theological Research Design (4)
  - Methodological Issues and Current Trends in Pastoral Theology (4)
  - Literature Search and writing an annotated bibliography in the field chosen for research or
  - Area Specific paper for research as suggested by the supervisor (4)
- b. As part of the coursework, the candidate shall write a review article in the format suitable for publication.
- c. Each candidate is expected to demonstrate their competencies before the submission of the thesis. The supervisor will certify the attainment of these competencies in the manner prescribed by the Doctoral Committee.
- d. All the candidates admitted to the Doctoral studies are required to complete the coursework within a year.

- e. A doctoral candidate must obtain a minimum GPA of 2.20 in the coursework to be eligible to continue the programme and submit the thesis.
- f. Each candidate will be provided with a transcript for the completion of the coursework.

## **7. PRESENTATION AND FORMAT OF THE THESIS**

- a. The Biblical Studies and Systematic Theology, History of Christianity candidates should follow the Society for Biblical Literature (SBL) Writing Style Guide.
- b. The other discipline candidates should follow either the APA style guide (either 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Version) or the Turabian (Chicago style of writing), or the new version available at the time of submission as recommended by their respective research guides.
- c. For PhD candidates, the expected word count is 60,000 to 80,000.
- d. For DMin candidates, the expected word count is 50,000 to 60,000.

## **8. SUPERVISORS**

- a. Each candidate shall work under the supervision of a supervisor.
- b. For specific candidates, especially for multi-disciplinary/interdisciplinary topics, a co-supervisor (s) may be appointed.
- c. A professor with at least five research publications in refereed journals or any regular Associate/Assistant professor at the university with a PhD/DTh degree and at least two research publications in refereed journals may be recognised as a supervisor.
- d. In the areas/disciplines where there is no or only a limited number of refereed journals, the university may relax the above condition to recognise a person as a supervisor with reasons recorded in writing.
- e. A supervisor may be from the faculty/adjunct faculty of the University/Research institution provided he/she is not a faculty member of any other university/Research Institution or has obtained a no-objection letter from the host institution.
- f. A Supervisor/Co-supervisor who is a professor may have up to three (3) PhD scholars and three (3) DMin scholars under his/her supervision at any given point in time. An Associate Professor may supervise two (2) PhD scholars and three (3) DMin scholars. However, subject to necessities, the Doctoral Committee may approve an increase in this number.
- g. A Mentor with special knowledge in the field may be appointed, apart from the supervisor, for a candidate pursuing his/her research in a greenfield or an indigenous discipline.

## **9. THE DOCTORAL COMMITTEE**

- a. The Dean of Research shall recommend the proposed members of the Doctoral Committee to the Academic Council.
- b. The Committee shall consist of at least three members, but not more than seven, who shall be senior academicians of Associate professor or professor or eminent experts in their discipline. The members of the Committee shall represent a range of disciplines in the field of theology. Members shall serve for three years and maybe be renominated.



- c. The Dean of Research shall be the Doctoral Committee Chair and shall appoint the Doctoral Committee secretary.
- d. In the Chairperson's absence, an Acting Chairperson may be appointed by the members who are present.
- e. The Doctoral Committee shall meet at least twice a year, and there shall be a quorum of at least half the members for each meeting. The manner of conducting the meeting shall be in-person/online/circulation.
- f. Powers of the Doctoral Committee
  - i. To recommend the names for Supervisors/co-supervisors.
  - ii. To recommend policies and regulations for the doctoral programme to the Academic Council from time to time.
  - iii. To assist the university in arranging the evaluation of submitted theses and conducting the examinations and public defence.
  - iv. To exercise overall supervision of the doctoral programme.

## **10. RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)**

### **A. Constitution of RAC**

The RAC shall be constituted by the Head of the Academic Unit and will consist of the following members:

1. Chair: Head of the Unit or nominee
2. Members:
  - i) Senior faculty members who are eligible to be a supervisor
  - ii) 1-3 external experts for a term of three years.
3. Ex-officio: Dean, Research, MLCU or nominee
4. Secretary: A faculty member appointed by the Chair.

### **B. Roles, Functions and Responsibilities of the RAC**

1. To develop a philosophy, mission, policies, and procedures which are in alignment with the Doctoral Committee and UGC Regulations
2. To conduct coursework solely or in addition to the coursework conducted by the university.
3. To recommend Supervisors/co-supervisors.
4. Research proposals and thesis.
5. To guide the research scholar in developing a research proposal.
6. To provisionally approve the research proposal and recommend it to the Doctoral Committee for final approval.
7. Review and assist in the progress of the research work of the research scholar as per the milestones and procedures of the RAC and submit consolidated annual reports to the Doctoral Committee.
8. To recommend the thesis for submission to the Doctoral Committee
9. To recommend examiners in consultation with the supervisor

10. To inquire into and document whether a research scholar's progress is unsatisfactory and to suggest corrective measures. Suppose the research scholar fails to implement these corrective measures satisfactorily; in that case, the RAC may recommend specific reasons for the cancellation of the registration of the research scholar to the Doctoral Committee.
11. Other Activities: The RAC may conduct other research activities and projects and conduct workshops, seminars, and conferences.

### **C. Review**

1. Each RAC shall submit a consolidated annual report to the Doctoral Committee at the end of the calendar year.
2. The Doctoral Committee shall review the annual report and provide feedback, recommendations, and decisions to the RAC.

## **11. RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (REC)**

### **A. Constitution of REC**

The REC shall be constituted by the Head of the Academic Unit and will consist of the following members:

1. Chair:

The Chairperson of the Committee will be appointed by the Head of the academic Unit, from among the members.

2. Members
3. The REC shall have a minimum of 4 members and shall be composed of persons from various walks of life who are not from the same academic unit. The terms of office of the REC shall be three years.
4. Ex-officio: Dean, Research, MLCU, or nominee iii. Secretary: Non-member and shall be appointed from among the Faculty by the Head of the academic unit.

### **B. Roles, Functions, and Responsibilities of the REC**

1. The REC may recommend a PhD and other research projects to the UREC or grant approval, with a copy to UREC.
2. The REC may take up provisionally approved research proposals.
3. The RAC and REC shall maintain suitable records, including individual, cohort and general administrative records.

**12. RECOGNITION AS COLLEGE/INSTITUTE FOR OFFERING DMIN/PHD: ACADEMIC, ADMINISTRATIVE AND INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS TO BE FULFILLED**

- a. Collaborating colleges/institutions may be considered eligible for DMin/PhD study centres if they satisfy qualified Research Supervisors' availability, required infrastructure, and supporting administrative and research promotion facilities
- b. Collaborating colleges/institutions should have at least two PhD qualified teachers/ other academic staff in the department, eligible to be PhD supervisors or co-supervisors.
- c. Library resources, including books, Indian and International journals, and e-journals, adequate research resources should be available.
- d. Collaborating colleges/institutions may access the facilities of neighbouring institutions.

**13. PROGRESS OF THE CANDIDATES**

- a. The research proposal should generally be submitted to the Doctoral Committee within one year of admission and complete the prescribed coursework.
- b. Suppose a candidate has not completed the coursework and has not received approval for their research proposal from the Doctoral Committee within two years of admission. In that case, their candidature will be terminated.
- c. Upon approval by the Doctoral Committee, the thesis's topic and the research study design shall be finalised. Any significant change of the topic or major modification recommended by the supervisor shall be approved by the Doctoral Committee.
- d. After obtaining the Doctoral Committee's approval, the candidate shall obtain the University Research Ethics Committee's (UREC) approval. The Research work may commence only after the approval of the UREC.
- e. On the supervisor's recommendation, the Doctoral Committee can approve the proposal that does not involve human, community and/or animal participation in research.
- f. The doctoral candidates shall submit a yearly progress report approved by the supervisor and co-supervisor to the Doctoral Committee through the Doctoral Centres.
- g. Each candidate is expected to present his/her work, or part thereof, at an appropriate academic conference, preferably national or international, and/or submit or publish the research work in a peer-reviewed journal with the prior approval of the supervisor and co-supervisor. The
- h. Supervisor and co-supervisor's names shall be included in all presentations and publications part of the thesis.
- i. A pre-submission presentation, approved by the supervisor and co-supervisor, shall be made upon completing the main part of the research work.
- j. The candidates should report suitably the findings of his/her research to the community before the final submission. The scholar submits a report to the secretary, Doctoral Committee, before the public defence.

#### **14. SUBMISSION OF THESIS AND PUBLIC DEFENCE**

- a. In the prescribed style and format, the candidate shall submit the thesis in five copies (along with a soft copy, duly attested and approved by the supervisor and co-supervisor (if any), to the university, not earlier than six months before the prescribed minimum period.
- b. Before sending the thesis to the examiner, a screening of the thesis on content, format, grammar, plagiarism, and the general standards expected of a PhD thesis shall be conducted by the Department of Doctoral Studies and Research.
- c. The Chairperson of the Doctoral Committee, in consultation with the supervisor and co-supervisor, and the recommendation of the RAC, shall recommend at least two suitable examiners.
- d. Within the stipulated period, each examiner shall submit a critical evaluation of the thesis to the university.
- e. Based on the examiners' evaluation, the candidate shall revise the thesis, if necessary, on the Supervisor and co-supervisor's advice, and resubmit the thesis in three copies, along with a soft copy of the thesis.
- f. After approval of the thesis by at least two examiners (out of which at least one shall ordinarily be from outside the State), a public defence will be conducted.
- g. The date and venue of the Public defence shall be announced in advance to enable scholars and interested members of the public. Any audience member may post questions to the candidate about the research project or its general field.
- h. The candidate's performance at the Public defence shall be evaluated by the Doctoral Committee members present. The Chairperson of the Doctoral Committee may announce the recommendation to the Doctoral Committee at the end of the Public defence.
- i. Ordinarily, the process of evaluation and public defence should be completed within six months of submitting the thesis.
- j. If any form of plagiarism is found, the University Policy on plagiarism will be applicable for all doctoral candidates.

#### **15. RESULTS AND AWARD OF DEGREE**

- a. The Doctoral Committee Chairperson shall declare the candidate's eligibility to be awarded the PhD/DMin degree or otherwise immediately upon the Public Defence conclusion and convey the recommendation to the university.
- b. The Doctoral Committee shall ratify the candidates' eligibility for the Doctoral Degree award and forward the names to the Academic Council.
- c. The candidates should have fulfilled all obligations to the university before the award of the degree.
- d. Successful candidates will be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy/ Doctor of Divinity degree under the university's seal and the Vice-Chancellor's signature. Along with the degree certificate, a provisional certificate may be issued certifying that the degree has been awarded in accordance with the provision to these regulations of the UGC.
- e. A copy of the successful thesis shall be kept in the University library and disseminated appropriately to the academic community.

- f. The unpublished thesis's copyright rests with the researcher, the university, and the community that collected the data. A declaration of copyright claim will be included as part of the thesis.
- g. Announcement of the PhD degrees awarded, and synopsis shall be sent to the University News, Association of Indian Universities, and the University Grants Commission.

#### **16. PhD DISCONTINUATION POLICY**

- a. Registration in the PhD degree may be cancelled by the scholar concerned by applying to the Secretary, Doctoral Committee. At the time of application, he/she should have paid all the tuition and other fees.
- b. He/she should enclose No Dues certificates from the Library, Accounts Department, Department of
- c. Research and Doctoral Studies. The application shall be signed by his/her research supervisor/Doctoral Centre. The Dean, Research Studies shall do consideration and approval of the application for discontinuation. Cancellation of the registration shall be effective from the date the student completes all the required formalities.
- d. The supervisor may recommend discontinuation of registration of a candidate based on unsatisfactory progress. The Dean, Research shall consider the recommendation and decide the due process.
- e. The Dean, Research may cancel the registration at any time in case of misconduct on the candidate's part after the due process.
- f. The Doctoral Committee shall be informed of the discontinuation or termination of the registration of any scholar.



**Dr Samuel Meshack**

Dean, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies  
Martin Luther Christian University