

**GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN RELIGION
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY**

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Implementation

This revised edition of the Guidelines, with any revisions in program requirements as compared to the edition dated January 4, 2008, will go into effect for students matriculating in or subsequent to the Fall semester of 2008. Students who have matriculated before that may opt to complete their program under these new requirements if they wish, but will otherwise be bound by those of the edition in effect at the time that they matriculated into the program.

GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN RELIGION

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Program Statement

Graduate Study in the Department of Religion at Syracuse University is distinctive in its focus on the category "religion" as an intellectually provocative and problematic concept rather than simply as a descriptive, institutional, or phenomenological label. The Department embraces the following two premises as fundamental to its educational program: 1) in a postmodern and global age, any study of religion must be interdisciplinary, and 2) credible studies of religion must investigate the material, textual, historical, and cultural dimensions of religions as well as the theories used to produce and analyze them.

The Graduate Program offers incoming students an opportunity to forge a unique, creative, and rigorous program of study. It emphasizes the comparative and theoretical study of religion in its various traditions and forms, and keeps the hermeneutical task always to the fore. The program fosters interdisciplinary approaches, offering training in traditional and contemporary theories and methods in conjunction with substantive investigations of diverse religious traditions and topics. (See "Areas of Study" below.)

The current faculty in the Department of Religion engage in teaching and research in the following interrelated areas, areas whose interrelation represents the Department's long-standing emphasis on innovative and interdisciplinary inquiry. Like the faculty, graduate students will engage at least two of these areas as they pursue their research.

Theories of Religion

Focus on how the category of religion has been theorized as well as on methodologies in the study of religion; includes continental philosophy and theology of religion; the anthropology, sociology, and psychology of religion; history of religions; ethics; issues of globalization

Histories of Religion

Focus on historical, cross-cultural, and comparative studies of religion, with an emphasis on interrelations among religion, culture, and society; includes traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and indigenous religions, and their development in geographical areas such as South Asia, Europe, the ancient Near East, the Roman Empire, and the Americas.

Arts and Aesthetics of Religion

Focus on the artistic, literary, performative, and media-related expressions of religion; includes the study of scriptures, literature and literary theory, rhetoric, architecture, sacred space and time, material culture, and various media of popular culture such as music, folklore, film, journalism, and virtual technologies.

B. Areas of Study

Students are required to gain competence in multiple historical periods, religious cultures, as well as approaches to studying religion. We encourage students to make imaginative use of all available resources in the creation of their own distinctive programs of study. Each student must 1) develop expertise in a particular subject area, and 2) cross or transcend traditional boundaries of a discipline and sub-field in innovative ways. By training scholars to think across traditional academic boundaries, the program at Syracuse prepares students for exciting research and teaching opportunities in religion.

Currently the department can support the following areas of study for students.

<u>Historical Periods</u>	<u>Religious Cultures</u>	<u>Approaches of Study</u>
Ancient Near Eastern	African American	Comparative Studies
Contemporary and Modern South Asia	American	Contemporary, Historical, and Critical
Greco-Roman	Ancient Near Eastern	Theology
Medieval and Modern Japan	Buddhist	Continental Philosophy
Modern and Contemporary Americas	Christian	Cultural Anthropology
Modern and Contemporary Continental Europe	European/Continental	Cultural Studies: Film, Media, Journalism
Modern Israel	Greco-Roman	Ethics/ Bioethics
	Hindu	Feminist, Marxist, Postcolonial Critical
	Islamic	Theory
	Japanese	Gender studies
	Judaic	Globalization
	Indigenous (the Americas)	History of Religions
	South Asian	Literary Studies
		Material Culture
		Philosophy of Religion
		Religion and Ecology
		Rhetorical Criticism
		Ritual and Performance Studies
		Scriptures Studies
		Social Scientific

II. ADVISING

- A. The Director of Graduate Studies will be assigned as the initial advisor for all new, first-year M.A. or Ph.D students with the understanding that such students will formally declare (with the Director) a regular advisor by no later than the end of that first year. (Students continuing into the Ph.D. program from the M.A. program here will not, for these purposes, be considered first-year students.) While students may subsequently change advisors (by permission of the Director), normally the regular, declared advisor will continue to function a) at least through the M.A. curricular program for M.A. students, and b) at least through the Ph.D. comprehensive examination level in the case of Ph.D. students. Students accepted into the Ph.D. from the SU Religion M.A. may continue with the same advisor if they so choose.
- B. During the third semester of the M.A. program, a thesis advisor shall be selected by the student from among the faculty in the Department. The advisor's advice and signature will be required throughout the process of proposing and writing the M.A. thesis.
- C. After completion of the Ph.D. comprehensive examinations, a dissertation director shall be selected by the student from among the faculty tenured in the Department. The director's advice and signature will be required throughout the prospectus and dissertation stages of Ph.D. studies.
- D. At all levels, the Advisor performs the important function of advising and consenting on such matters as course selection, designing the student's Program of Study, petitioning the Graduate Committee, and submitting requests to sit for examinations.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.A. DEGREE

- A. A minimum of 30 credits: 27 taken in regularly scheduled Religion graduate courses or seminars, including no more than nine credits in advisor-approved courses offered outside the department, plus three thesis credits.
 1. To ensure breadth in the study of religion, the M.A. courses must (a) fall within more than one historical period, (b) include a diversity of religious traditions, and (c) include at least one course focusing on textual issues. Normally, Independent Study courses are discouraged at the M.A. level.

2. Special requirements for recipients of a Foreign Language Areas Studies Fellowship are as follows: Due to the requirement of the FLAS program for language study in each semester, FLAS students will be able to count language courses as part of their normal course-load and program of study in the Department of Religion. However, in order to correct for the loss of contact-hours in the study of religion (i.e., the three credit-hours per semester that are devoted to language study), FLAS students must insure that advanced language courses (i.e., courses beyond elementary instruction) contain contents that pertain directly to the study of religion (e.g., reading primary documents in a given religious tradition, for example, the Ramayana).

B. Language Requirement

1. Candidates who matriculate in the program at the M.A. level must complete one language requirement (normally French or German) before the beginning of the third semester of study, and the other must be completed before the beginning of the third semester of Ph.D. study. See IV. B under Requirements of the Ph.D. degree for further information.

C. Residency, Courses and Comprehensives

1. The M.A. may be obtained upon completion of a minimum of three semesters of full-time study, and upon writing and successfully defending the M.A. thesis.
2. Ordinarily the student will register for three courses each semester for three semesters.
3. M.A. students are required to take a 3-credit course (REL 691) introducing them to a variety of approaches to the study of religion in the Department, as a part of their residency requirements.
4. Students may, with proper approvals, sit in on undergraduate courses as a part of the work they may do for graduate -level course requirements.
5. A student will not be allowed to submit a thesis if there are any 'Incomplete' grades outstanding.
6. There is a one-year limitation on the carrying of incompletes.
7. During the semesters of residency for the M.A., a student will ordinarily not be permitted to register in research and writing courses. Contingencies will always be allowed consideration through petitioning the Graduate Committee.

D. M.A. Thesis and Oral Defense

1. Thesis Proposal

In order to write and defend an M.A. thesis in the Spring semester, a thesis proposal must be submitted to the Graduate Committee by November 15 and bear the approval of the thesis advisor. (The thesis advisor need not be the same person as the academic advisor; the latter's responsibilities are terminated upon the candidate's fulfillment of all curricular requirements.)

a. Guidelines for Writing the Thesis Proposal

The proposal is an important step in both giving initial shape to, and making argument for, a

thesis topic and design. It is therefore a projection and an instrument of research rather than a definitive statement. The proposal should be between five and ten pages in length.

However, the proposal needs to concern itself with the plausibility of the thesis and be indicative of the candidate's ability to argue and defend it appropriately in time to complete the M.A. on schedule. Cogency, clarity, and feasibility, then, are the primary qualities to be attained.

The proposal typically includes the following elements:

- i) a statement of the thesis, together with an explication of it.
- ii) a survey of the literature pertaining to the argument, showing the contribution it will make to the field.
- iii) a chapter by chapter projection indicating the general design of the thesis.
- iv) a bibliography, together with a demonstration of its availability.

b. Procedures for Submitting a Thesis Proposal

- i) Once the proposal is written, approved and signed by the MA Thesis Advisor as evidence of her/his concurrence, it shall be sent to the Departmental Reader.
- ii) The Proposal will be circulated to all faculty members, who will be encouraged to submit critical comments in writing to the Departmental Reader.
- iii) The MA Thesis Committee will review and decide whether to approve the written proposal. It shall be the responsibility of the MA Thesis Advisor to insure that issues raised in writing by faculty be addressed in the committee's discussion.
- iv) A report of the critical reflections and/or recommendations arising from the MA Thesis Committee's discussion will be prepared by the Departmental Reader and given to the student and the Thesis Advisor. A signed report needs to be submitted to the Graduate Director for the student's academic file.

2. Thesis

a. Writing the Thesis

The MA Thesis Committee will consist of the Thesis Advisor, the First Reader, and the Departmental Reader with the latter being designated by the Director of Graduate Studies. The Departmental Reader must be a member of the Department of Religion. The Departmental Reader will read the thesis on behalf of the Department and certify whether it is ready to go to the oral defense.

The Thesis Committee shall establish in advance and consistently require conformity with the committee's directions or questions of style and format. The Department of Religion requires, e.g., that all quotations in a foreign language be translated either in the text of the dissertation with the original in a footnote, or vice-versa. The Graduate School suggests the MLA guide sheet regarding form and style, but accepts the use of Kate Turabian's Guide for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press). Footnotes, rather than end-notes, are required. Consistency in form of documentation is absolutely requisite.

b. Procedures for Submitting a Thesis

- i) A report from the Thesis Advisor must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies certifying that the thesis is ready for oral examination. The Departmental Reader must concur.
- ii) The student shall present one copy of the thesis for examination and format approval to Graduate Certification at least five weeks prior to graduation.
- iii) The student shall secure from and file all necessary forms requesting the oral defense with Graduate Certification.
- iv) At least four copies of the thesis, including the original, shall be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies no less than three weeks prior to the date when the student desires to be examined. This minimum time does not guarantee that the oral will be that soon.
- v) The Director of Graduate Studies may suggest any faculty member deemed appropriate to Graduate Certification to serve as Chairperson of the Thesis Examining Committee. The Graduate School requires that this chairperson be someone outside of the faculty of the Department of Religion. These four persons shall be the members of the Examining Committee for the oral defense.
- vi) All graduate students shall be notified of the date and invited to attend each oral defense.

3. The Oral Defense, Corrections and Revisions of the Thesis

- a. The oral defense shall be conducted by no fewer than four faculty members, consisting of all three members of the thesis committee and the Chairperson of the Thesis Examining Committee who serves as the representative of the Graduate School. All members of the faculty of the Department of Religion are invited to participate in the oral examination.
- b. The oral defense will lead to one of the following decisions:
 - i) Pass with minor corrections.
 - ii) Pass with revisions.
 - iii) Fail with opportunity for rewriting all or major portions of the dissertation to be defended at another oral.
 - iv) Fail with no opportunity for rewrite.
- c. It shall be the responsibility of the MA Thesis Advisor and any other members of the MA Thesis Examining Committee, at the discretion of the Committee, to certify to the Graduate School that all corrections and/or revisions required by the Committee have been completed to the satisfaction of representative(s) of the Examining Committee.

4. Graduation Requirements

The Office of Graduate Certification requires the completion and filing of a number of forms, payment of certain fees, etc. before graduation is possible. The student is expected to fulfill all these requirements directly with Graduate Certification.

- E. Prior to the defense of the M.A. thesis, a "Program of Study" -- approved by the Advisor and the Department Chair -- shall be filed with Graduate Certification. Certification will be sent that the student has fulfilled all other academic requirements for the M.A.
 - 1. The student shall file graduation request forms and any other materials requested with the Graduate School, including the form for transferring from the M.A. to the Ph.D. program, if indicated.
- F. M.A. students wishing to enter the Ph.D. program must apply for admission at the same time as outside applicants by the admissions deadline (usually January 10th) in the year in which they plan enter the Ph.D. program.

IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

A. A minimum of:

- 1. the M.A. in religion (or its equivalent) and a minimum of 36 credits, 24 credits of which should normally be taken in the Department of Religion. In addition, it is necessary to be accredited with 12 additional dissertation hours. (Cf.IV.C.1 below.)

Special requirements for recipients of a Foreign Language Areas Studies Fellowship are as follows: Due to the requirement of the FLAS program for language study in each semester, FLAS students will be able to count language courses as part of their normal course-load and program of study in the Department of Religion. However, in order to correct for the loss of contact-hours in the study of religion (i.e., the three credit-hours per semester that are devoted to language study), FLAS students must insure that advanced language courses (i.e., courses beyond elementary instruction) contain contents that pertain directly to the study of religion (e.g., reading primary documents in a given religious tradition, for example, the Ramayana).

B. Language Requirements

- 1. Competence in two languages, normally French and German. Substitutions are possible with appropriate petitions to the Graduate Committee.
- 2. For candidates who matriculate at the Ph.D. level, one language requirement must have been completed prior to the beginning of classes, and the other must be completed before the beginning of the third semester of study. Documented certification of successfully completed language examinations at other institutions will be accepted for entering Ph.D. candidates.
- 3. Language examinations will test the candidate's competence in reading for comprehension. The examinations will consist of passages drawn from texts pertinent to the study of religion (usually two to four pages in length). Each passage will be accompanied by a series of questions based on the text (for example, descriptions of a text's argument, paraphrases of sentences and/or paragraphs, summaries of issues under consideration). Candidates will have up to three hours to read the passage and answer the questions and may make use of a lexicon appropriate to the language being tested. Use of computers is not permitted.

4. The Department will maintain sample examinations for student review.
5. Language examinations will be administered by the Department of Religion five times yearly (January, May, June, July, August).
6. Language requirements may also be met by earning B or better in language 620 course at undergraduate 202 level or higher. Credit for courses fulfilling language requirements will not count towards the degree. Language study *beyond the language requirements* may count for credits towards the M.A. or Ph.D. degree (grade B or better) up to the existing limits for non-departmental courses (M.A. 9 hours, Ph.D. 12 hours).
7. Candidates who fail to complete the language requirements according to the stipulations above may lose financial aid awards until such requirements are met.

C. Residency

1. B.D., Th.M., M.Th., or other degrees representing theological school completion, will ordinarily be accepted as the equivalent to an M.A. in Religion. Further, courses taken at the graduate level at another accredited institution will be evaluated on a course by course basis by the Graduate Committee, up to 30 hours of credit (i.e., the equivalent of the M.A.) may be transferred.
2. Ph.D. students new to the SU Religion Department are required to take a 3-credit course (REL 691) introducing them to a variety of approaches to the study of religion in the Department, as a part of their residency requirements.
3. Students may, with proper approvals, sit in on undergraduate courses as a part of the work they may do for graduate-level course requirements.
4. The Religion Department recognizes that at times students may need to pursue lines of study independently, that is, outside of regularly offered graduate seminars. Such independent study may be pursued through the Department's Research and Writing courses. These are guided by a faculty member and are as vigorous and comprehensive as regular graduate seminars in terms of their requirements for advanced study. Research and Writing courses are offered to support specific research interests of students that are not available in the curriculum and that will enhance a given student's program in breadth or depth; they are not to be used *solely* to prepare for doctoral examinations. Students must negotiate an agreement on a Research and Writing course with an individual faculty member, who has complete discretion whether to guide it and, if so, on what terms. To register, the student and faculty member must together complete the Proposal for Independent Study form and register under one of the Research and Writing numbers (REL 719-799).
5. Before a Ph.D. can be awarded a student must have accrued a total of 12 dissertation hours. This is normally done by registering awarded tuition credits not used for graduate courses for dissertation hours.
6. Students are strongly advised to complete all work for courses in the semester in which they are taken; in the event that an Incomplete is requested, students are required to complete the course work and thus to remove the Incomplete within one year of the date that the Incomplete was recorded.

D. Comprehensive Examinations

1. The Ph.D examinations are designed to test students in specialized subjects within the framework of the areas of study listed above. By emphasizing a diversity of topics, approaches and scope of study, the four-exam structure requires students to gain expertise in their chosen fields of study. The Ph.D. examinations also prepare students to develop competencies required for their future scholarship and teaching in religion.

The four comprehensive exams will be determined according to the candidate's research area of specialization in consultation with his or her advisor. They must be approved by the Advisor and the Graduate Committee by the end of the candidate's second year of doctoral residency.

The four examinations must fall under the following headings:

a) *Period or movement*: This examination will deal with a clearly demarcated time-period or a specified religious movement or an identifiable set of influential religious ideas within or across culture(s). Students must demonstrate a strong grasp of (a) the history of, (b) the cultural, intellectual, or religious context of, and (c) the secondary scholarship on the period or movement, and show the ability to think constructively and critically about its significance.

b) *Person*: This examination will deal with either the completed literary corpus of a religious thinker or with the biography (including hagiography) and religious legacy of a key religious figure. Students must (a) show familiarity with the person's life, (b) grapple with his/her body of works, and (c) demonstrate its influence on subsequent conceptions and/or religious practice or thought in the wider culture.

c) *Text*: This examination will focus on a particular text or textual tradition that is regarded as sacred to a religious community or exemplifies the religious orientations of a society. Students must demonstrate knowledge of (a) the history of interpretation of their text(s), (b) textual-critical issues such as authorship, context, transmission, etc., and (c) arguments about their meanings and uses.

d) *Problem*: This examination must articulate an issue or problem within an area that will ideally provide a transition to the topic of the Ph.D. dissertation. An issue or a problem may be an event, idea, movement or scholarly position that has provoked debate. Students must demonstrate the ability a) to formulate a problem, b) to grasp and evaluate relevant theories and methodologies, c) to address cogently and argue systematically an issue, problem or thesis.

The problem examination will be graded as a written examination, but in addition, there will be an "oral review" of the problem examination. The oral committee will consist of three faculty: the first is the exam writer; the second one agrees to be the reader at the time the request to sit is submitted; and the third will be assigned by the Graduate Director after the exam has been written. All members of the oral committee will grade the written examination. The results of the oral review will be taken into consideration in the grading of the examination.

The examinations taken together (a) must fall within at least two historical periods, (b) must reflect more than one area of study listed on page 1, and (c) must include a diversity of religious traditions unless competence has been previously demonstrated by graduate-level examination or its equivalent.

2. In order to be approved by the Advisor and the Graduate Committee, a request-to-sit for Ph.D. examinations must include -- for each examination -- a 300-500 word description of

the problem, thesis or topic of the exam, and an organized bibliography. The narrative and bibliography must first be approved by the writer of the examination who may also require the student to include the basic scholarly literature of the subject area.

3. Comprehensive examinations are administered twice a year -- in the Fall semester during a selected two-week period between September 15 and November 15, and in the Spring semester during a selected two week period February 1 and March 31. Also, they are taken no earlier than two months after completion of the residency requirements. In order to sit during the Spring examination period, a Request-To-Sit must be submitted to the Graduate Committee by no later than November 15. In order to sit during the Autumn examination period, a Request-To-Sit must be submitted to the Graduate Committee by no later than March 1.
4. Comprehensive examinations test the student's ability to conceptualize, analyze, and organize discrete bodies of material. There is no restriction, therefore, on the examinee's access to data during the period of the examination, and students may write the examination in a place of their choice. On the day of each examination, the student will pick up the examination from the Departmental secretary at 8:30 a.m. and return the typed or printed examination no later than 5:00 p.m.
5. The four examinations (period or movement, person, problem, and text) are structured so as to require of the student a competence in a variety of methodologies in the study of religion, e.g., historical, biographical, textual-critical, issue-centered, etc.
6. Procedural Stages:
 - a. The Graduate Committee shall review each request to sit, and, with whatever modifications it requires, the form shall be filed in the student's permanent file and the student notified of the committee's action.
 - b. The Director of Graduate Studies shall keep a file of all requests arranged according to the dates when each student could first be eligible to sit for exams.
 - c. When it is determined that all eligibility criteria have been met (language requirements, removal of incompletes), the Director will distribute requests for specific examination texts to faculty members.
 - d. The faculty members of the Graduate Committee will review questions submitted by faculty members and may request modifications in the examination texts where necessary.
 - e. The secretary to the Director will then prepare three copies of each examination in the appropriate form. One copy will be placed on permanent file in the Director's office, another will subsequently be made available for perusal by other graduate students, and one copy will be placed in an appropriately labeled envelope for the student to receive at the time of examination.
 - f. The original writer of the exam shall be the first reader and evaluator, and at least one other reader, selected at the Director's discretion, shall evaluate the exams. The oral review committee of the problem exam will have three examiners (see 1.d). On occasions of extreme divergence between the responses of the first two readers, a referee reader shall be secured by the director. All exams shall be evaluated by at least two faculty members, at least one of whom shall be from the Department.

- g. When all reports from readers for all exams taken during a given examination period have been received, a meeting of the faculty members of the Graduate Committee shall be devoted to assessing the overall results of each student's examinations. The committee shall have discretionary authority to require a student, on the basis of received evaluations, to retake one, several, or all of the examinations under conditions to be determined by the Committee, or to require some alternative means for a student to demonstrate quality competence in area(s) where the committee desires further evidence. The Director shall immediately notify the candidate of the Committee's decision, orally if possible, but in every case when the decision is positive in writing, a copy of which notification is to be filed in the student's permanent record.
- h. Students desiring feedback on the overall quality of their comprehensive examinations must initially talk with the Director of Graduate Studies. Students may also seek feedback on individual examinations from their Advisor and from the faculty persons who wrote the examinations.
- i. Upon final certification by the Graduate Committee that a student has completed all requirements relating to comprehensive examinations, the Graduate School shall be so notified and a Program of Study – approved by the advisor and Department Chair – filed. Copies shall be placed in the student's permanent record, and a letter shall be written to the Syracuse University Library (and/or other libraries in specific cases) certifying the student's status and requesting that appropriate library usage privileges be extended to the student to pursue his/or her dissertation research. (Cf.V below.)

E. Prospectus, Dissertation and Oral Defense

1. Prospectus

After a candidate has successfully fulfilled all curricular requirements and passed his/her Comprehensive Examinations, he/she will submit a dissertation Prospectus which will also bear the approval of his/her dissertation advisor. (The dissertation advisor need not be the same person as the academic advisor; the latter's responsibilities are terminated upon the candidate's fulfillment of all curricular requirements.)

a. Guidelines for Writing the Prospectus

The prospectus is an important step in both giving initial shape to, and making argument for, a thesis topic and dissertation design. It is therefore a projection and an instrument of research rather than a definitive statement. The prospectus should be between fifteen and twenty pages in length.

However, the prospectus needs to concern itself with the plausibility of the thesis and be indicative of the candidate's ability to argue and defend it appropriately. Cogency and clarity, then, are the primary qualities to be attained.

The prospectus typically includes the following elements:

- i) a statement of the thesis, together with an explication of it.
- ii) a survey of the literature pertaining to the argument, showing the need for this dissertation, assuring its originality, and articulating the contribution it will make to the field.
- iii) a chapter by chapter projection indicating the general design of the dissertation.

- iv) a bibliography, together with a demonstration of its availability.

b. Procedures for Submitting a Dissertation Prospectus

- i) Once the prospectus is written in compliance with the Guidelines for Writing the Prospectus, it shall be sent to the Graduate Director with the name of the Dissertation Advisor, who shall sign the prospectus as evidence of concurrence.
- ii) A Prospectus Committee consisting of the Dissertation Advisor, plus two other faculty members (one of whom will chair the Committee) appointed by the Graduate Director in consultation with the dissertation Advisor, will be constituted. This committee will conduct an oral evaluation of the prospectus. The Prospectus Committee operates independently from the Dissertation Committee (see E.2.a. below) and does not necessarily include the same faculty members (except for the advisor of the dissertation).
- iii) The Prospectus will be circulated to all faculty members, who will be encouraged to submit critical comments in writing to the Prospectus Committee. All faculty members will be invited to attend and to participate in the oral evaluation. It shall be the responsibility of the Chair of the Prospectus Committee to insure that issues raised in writing by faculty be addressed in the oral evaluation.
- iv) A report of the critical reflections and/or recommendations arising from the oral evaluation will be prepared by the Chair of the Prospectus Committee. The report, which will be signed by the Chair of the Prospectus Committee and the student, will be filed with the Director of Graduate Studies together with a copy of the Prospectus. A copy will also be given to the Dissertation Advisor.

2. Dissertation

a. Writing the Dissertation

The student is expected to establish an appropriate working relationship with the Dissertation Committee by consulting with the Dissertation Advisor who shall coordinate the advice and suggestions offered by the other members of the committee. The candidate will also, after consulting with the Advisor and securing his or her agreement, designate a First Reader who will be a member of the Dissertation Committee (see E.2.a. below). The Dissertation Committee will consist of the Dissertation Advisor, the First Reader, and the Departmental Reader with the latter being designated by the Director of Graduate Studies. The Departmental Reader must be a member of the Department of Religion. The Departmental Reader will read the dissertation on behalf of the Department and certify whether it is ready to go to the oral defense.

The Dissertation Committee shall establish in advance and consistently require conformity with the committee's directions or questions of style and format. The Department of Religion requires, e.g., that all quotations in a foreign language be translated either in the text of the dissertation with the original in a footnote, or vice-versa. The Graduate School suggests the MLA guide sheet regarding form and style, but accepts the use of Kate Turabian's Guide for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press). Footnotes, rather than end-notes, are required. Consistency in form of documentation is absolutely requisite.

b. Procedures for Submitting a Dissertation

- i) A report from the Dissertation Advisor must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies certifying that at least a majority of the committee members has judged the dissertation to be ready for oral examination. (Any dissenting judgments shall be included in this report.)
- ii) The student shall present one copy of the dissertation for examination and approval to the Graduate School.
- iii) The student shall secure from and file all necessary forms requesting the oral defense with the Graduate School.
- iv) At least six copies of the dissertation, including the original, shall be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies ~~no less than three weeks~~ prior to the date when the student desires to be examined. This minimum time does not guarantee that the oral will be that soon.
- v) The Director of Graduate Studies, considering any requests made by the student, shall invite at least two faculty members in addition to the Dissertation Committee (usually but not necessarily from the faculty of the Department of Religion) to serve on the Dissertation Examining Committee. Further, the Director of Graduate Studies may suggest any faculty member deemed appropriate to the Graduate School to serve as Chairperson of the Dissertation Examining Committee. The Graduate School requires that this chairperson be someone outside of the faculty of the Department of Religion. These six persons shall be the members of the Examining Committee for the oral defense.
- vi) All graduate students shall be notified of the date and invited to attend each oral defense.

3. The Oral Defense, Corrections and Revisions of the Dissertation

- a. The oral defense shall be conducted by no fewer than five faculty members, which five shall include all three members of the Dissertation committee and no fewer than two additional examiners, and the Chairperson of the Dissertation Examining Committee who serves as the representative of the Graduate School. All members of the faculty of the Department of Religion are invited to participate in the oral examination.
- b. The oral defense will lead to one of the following decisions:
 - i) Pass with minor corrections.
 - ii) Pass with revisions.
 - iii) Fail with opportunity for rewriting all or major portions of the dissertation to be defended at another oral.
 - iv) Fail with no opportunity for rewrite.
- c. It shall be the responsibility of the Dissertation Advisor and any other members of the Dissertation Examining Committee, at the discretion of the Committee, to certify to the Graduate School that all corrections and/or revisions required by the Committee have been completed to the satisfaction of representative(s) of the Examining Committee.

4. Graduation Requirements

The Graduate School requires the completion and filing of a number of forms, payment of certain fees, etc. before graduation is possible. The student is expected to fulfill all these requirements directly with the Graduate School.

V. THE M.PHIL DEGREE

The requirements for this degree are identical to those for the Ph.D. degree (see IV above), except that no Prospectus or Dissertation is required.

VI. DEGREE-PROGRESS: TIME LIMITATIONS

A. M.A. Degree:

There shall be a three-semester limitation between the completion of M.A. residency and the completion of the degree.

B. Ph.D. Degree:

There shall be:

1. A two-year limitation between the completion of Ph.D. residency and the completion of comprehensive examinations.
2. The Graduate School establishes a five-year limitation between the completion of Ph.D. comprehensive examinations and the completion of the dissertation.

C. General Proviso:

The Department of Religion, like the Graduate School, reserves the right to grant or not grant petitions extending these limitations, and to establish conditions on any approvals. Similarly, the Department of Religion may establish criteria for considering students 'inactive' in the program, and any special conditions for reactivation.

VII. TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

A. Teaching Assistantships are normally awarded only to students in Ph.D. ranks, and the Department of Religion – through its Graduate Committee – reserves the right to establish other eligibility requirements and exceptions to these policies.

B. Teaching Assistants are expected to be available to devote an average of twenty hours of work each week during the semesters to their TA duties.

C. Policies Regarding Duration

1. TA appointments are normally for three consecutive years, though upon application a one-year extension may be possible.
2. University Fellowships provide two years of University support and one subsequent year of Departmental TA support. Any additional years of TA support will be on the following basis:

- a. Students coming into the Ph.D. from a Fellowship-supported M.A. may apply for a possible one- or two-year extension of the TA mentioned in #2 above.
- b. New Fellowship-supported Ph.D. students may apply for a possible one-year extension of the TA mentioned in #2 above.

VIII. TEACHING ASSOCIATES

- A. Some students have appointments as Teaching Associates from the College of Arts and Sciences for the fourth year of their Ph.D. studies.
- B. As half of their teaching responsibilities for the year, Teaching Associates are required to teach two lower-division undergraduate sections. Students may teach REL 120 Introduction to the Study of Religion and/or another catalogue lower division course in the Department of Religion, if available and approved by the Chair of the Department.
- C. Teaching Associates are expected to devote the other ten hours of their service to the Department as Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants.

revised: 7/23/2009