

**DEPARTMENT OF  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

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**School of Arts and Sciences  
University of Pittsburgh**

**GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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## OVERVIEW

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The principal objective of the graduate program is to provide students with the research and teaching tools that may lead to academic positions and other careers in which the academic skills of a religionist are utilized. We are committed to the training of specialists who know how to think, write, research and communicate about the diverse forms of expression found in and among the religions of the world.

The graduate program is organized around three thematic subfields of study—Religion, Ethnicity and Culture; Religion and Modernity; and Text in Context – and four areas of specialization that reflect our faculty’s special strengths in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, North American religion, early modern and modern Judaism; and religious thought and language. We share common interests in cross-cultural and transnational dialogue and approach the academic study of religion from historical, philosophical and ethnographic/social scientific perspectives. We work on such themes as the relationship between doctrine and praxis, religious transmission and transformation, secretive societies and religion in Diaspora, ritual and power, intellectual and institutional history, history of the book, popular religion and culture, religion and nationalism, politics and material culture and the hierarchies of ethnicity, race and gender.

The interdisciplinary nature of the department attracts graduate students with diverse interests and from varied backgrounds. The department nurtures the professional development of graduate students through a strong sense of community, collegiality and self-governance, an open and innovative environment in which to study and a vigorous commitment to careful mentorship, including training in the development of research, teaching and grant-writing skills and assistance with the placement process.

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## ADMINISTRATION

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The Department of Religious Studies administers two graduate programs: the M.A. program making use of the resources at the University of Pittsburgh and the Ph.D. Cooperative Program in Religion which, in addition to University resources, includes select faculty from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. The graduate program is governed by the more general regulations established by the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh, which awards both the M.A. and Ph.D. degree.

The M.A. program is wholly administered by the Department of Religious Studies. The Ph.D. program has a consultative board comprised of six members of the core faculty in Religious Studies and five members of the adjunct faculty at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. The Committee of Eleven meets at regular intervals and is responsible for all administrative decisions. The Curriculum Committee, a subcommittee of the Committee of Eleven, meets twice annually to consider matters relating to admission and curriculum. Like the M.A. program, the central administration of the Ph.D. program is housed within the Department of Religious Studies.

The management of the M.A. and Ph.D. programs is the special responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies, who is a member of the core faculty in the Department of Religious Studies. The Director of Graduate Studies handles all questions regarding to procedure and student status and serves as the gateway between Ph.D. students in the Cooperative Program in Religion and the Curriculum Committee and the Committee of Eleven. The current Director of Graduate Studies is Dr. Adam Shear.

## FACULTY

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Complete faculty information, including adjunct and affiliated faculty members, can be found on the Department of Religious Studies website <http://www.pitt.edu/~relgst>

### **RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY GRADUATE FACULTY**

***Dale C. Allison***

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***Clark Chilson*** – Director of Undergraduate Studies

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**Adam Shear** – Director of Graduate Studies

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**John E. Wilson, Jr.**

Professor of Church History, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary  
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On the Ph.D. level all core graduate faculty members may serve as chairs of Ph.D. qualifying examination committees and as doctoral advisors. All other Pitt and area-affiliated faculty members who are members of the graduate faculty may serve on qualifying examination and dissertation committees. One member of the dissertation committee must come from a department outside of Religious Studies. One faculty member of the Department of Religious Studies who is not a member of the graduate faculty may serve on qualifying examination and/or as a fifth member of dissertation committees. The Graduate faculty roster is located at <http://www.ir.pitt.edu/gradfac/homepg.htm>

On the M.A. level, typically chairs of the comprehensive examination committee and thesis advisors and at least one additional committee member come from the graduate faculty of the Department of Religious Studies. One religious studies faculty member who is not a member of the graduate faculty or one University affiliated faculty member who is on the graduate faculty may serve on comprehensive or thesis committees.

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## FIELDS OF STUDY

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The Department of Religious Studies treats fields that fall under such established rubrics as history of religion, philosophy of religion, anthropology of religion, Buddhist studies, Christian studies and Jewish studies. At the same time, most members of the department explore topics from thematic perspectives that cut across cultural, national and geographic lines and deal with conceptual issues and

methodologies that go beyond the specific concerns of their specialty, fall outside traditional categorizations, and reflect new directions in the academic study of religions of East Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North America, popular religion and ritual, intellectual and social history, religion and politics, ethnicity, gender, material culture and the arts.

The graduate program strives to create an environment that cultivates first-rate scholarly research while producing scholars and teachers who can think and communicate beyond their area of specialization. Students are encouraged to work with their advisor to design an innovative, interdisciplinary course of study that addresses their specific intellectual needs and career goals and makes use of all available University resources. Students nevertheless are expected to demonstrate mastery in one the areas of specialization and identify with one of the thematic subfields offered by the department.

The graduate program in religious studies is organized around **three thematic subfields** shared by most of the faculty:

### **RELIGION, ETHNICITY AND CULTURE**

This thematic subfield treats the role of religion in the creation, continuance and transformation of social, cultural and political hierarchical systems. It includes such areas as ethnic and minority subcultures among non-dominant religious cultures, social cultural and political identities and communalities, points of contention and difference, religion and the state, and religion and the production of literature, and the arts and other cultural forms.

### **RELIGION AND MODERNITY**

This subfield considers the impact of modernization on traditional cultures. Included under this rubric are the following: religion and politics, nationalism, transnational and globalization, race, class and gender, religious violence and secretive societies, religion in Diaspora, popular religion, ritual studies, public and civil religion and new technologies.

### **TEXT IN CONTEXT**

This subfield emphasizes interpretive strategies involved in philosophical, practical, institutional, social, and intellectual history. Here the history of ideas and practices are tied to the means of their transmission, wherein “text” is understood to include ideologies and concepts, visual, print and other objects, languages and literatures and other semiotic forms. Included under this rubric are historiography, historical-ethnography, hagiography and mythology, print culture, rhetoric, and other philosophic, literary and social scientific interpretive approaches to the academic study of religion.

The department offers graduate training in **four areas of specialization**:

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#### **RELIGION IN AMERICA**

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Paula M. Kane  
Linda Penkower

Alexander Orbach  
John Wilson

The Department of Religious Studies concentrates on the cultural history of religious institutions, movements, thoughts, rituals and symbols of religion in America and emphasizes a historical-



ethnographic/social scientific approach. Current faculty strengths include popular religion, ethnicity, class and gender, immigrant and minority communities, religion and politics, religion in the arts, religion responses to modernity, the processes of religious transmission to the Americas and religion interaction and violence.

When applicable, students working on American religions participate in one of the area studies programs on the University Center for International Studies and/or in such programs as Cultural Film or Women's Studies which offer limited research and language study opportunities beyond those available in the department.

Students working on religion in America typically also work with affiliated faculty in Anthropology, English, History, History of Art and Architecture, Slavic and other departments dealing with languages and literatures and adjunct faculty at Carnegie Mellon University.

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## **RELIGION IN ASIA**

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Clark Chilson

Linda Penkower

The Department of Religion Studies focuses on the study of East Asian religion in their historical and cultural contexts. Current strengths include medieval and modern Chinese and Japanese Buddhist history and the historical ethnographic study of Chinese and Japanese popular religion. Students specialize in either China or Japan, while gaining a general knowledge of all major Asian traditions. Advanced Chinese and/or Japanese are critical to course work and research. Students have typically completed two or more years of formal language study prior to entering the program and are expected to have competence in both languages appropriate to their research interests prior to beginning work on the dissertation.

Students concentrating on religions of Asia typically also earn a certificate in Asian studies. The Asian Studies Center offers generous academic year and summer funding for research and language study beyond the funding available in the department.

Students working on Asian religions typically also work with affiliated faculty in Anthropology, East Asian Languages and Literatures, History, History of Art and Architecture and adjunct faculty at Carnegie Mellon University.

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## **JEWISH HISTORY**

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Alexander Orbach

Adam Shear

The Department of Religious Studies emphasizes the study of Judaism in its historical, cultural and political contexts in America, Eastern and Western Europe and the Middle East. Current strengths include early modern and modern Jewish history and historiography, Diaspora studies, political and intellectual history, history of the book and print culture, identity formation, and Christian-Muslim-Jewish interactions. Students working in this specialization are expected to have or quickly develop a command of Hebrew and other languages of research.

As applicable, students working on Jewish history typically earn a certificate in Cultural, Medieval and Renaissance, European, and/or East European and Russian Studies, which offer research and language opportunities beyond those available in the department. They also participate in the Program in Jewish Studies.

Students working on Jewish history typically also work with affiliated faculty in English, French and Italian, History, History of Art and Architecture, Political Science, and adjunct faculty at Carnegie Mellon University.

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## RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE

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Dale Allison  
Tony Edwards

David Brumble  
John Wilson

Religions are rich and varied in their cognitive and linguistic expressions. A specialization in religious thought and language is intended for students who want either to concentrate on varieties specific to western monotheism or to work more broadly on the comparative study of religious thought. Current faculty strengths include metaphor, paradox, myth, narrative, genre, hermeneutics, ideology, exegetical argument, early Christian thought, early modern theology, secular and sacred history, philosophy of religion, and other interpretive approaches to religious texts. Students working in these areas typically work closely with religious texts and must have or quickly develop a facility in reading the languages of the peoples they plan to study.

Students working in religious thought and language typically participate in the Cultural Studies and/or Medieval and Renaissance Studies certificate programs, as applicable.

Students working in this specialization also typically work with affiliated faculty in Classics, English, French and Italian, History, History of Art and Architecture, Philosophy, and adjunct faculty at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Carnegie Mellon University.

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## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

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The Department of Religious Studies offers graduate seminars on specific thematic and methodological topics and special topics seminars in each of the religious traditions represented by the faculty. Instruction within the areas of specialization is also conducted in directed study courses tailored in form and content to meet the interests and needs of students. Directed reading courses are typically conducted as one-on-one tutorials with a faculty member, but may involve several students. Directed reading seminars for graduate credit are also offered in conjunction with advanced undergraduate courses, in which graduate students also participate.

As a department that values interdisciplinary study, Religious Studies encourages students to take advantage of all available resources at the University. Most students take graduate seminars and directed study courses with faculty in such neighboring departments as Anthropology, Classics, East Asian Languages and Literatures, French and Italian, German, History, History of Art and Architecture, Philosophy, Political Science and Slavic Languages and Literature. Students may also cross-register for credit and work with affiliated faculty at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Carnegie Mellon University. Students are further encouraged to take advantage of University certificate programs in Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Medieval and Renaissance Studies and Women's Studies and in the area studies programs offered through the University Center for International Studies.

Students are assigned to an advisor upon entering the graduate program based on their stated area of concentration or specialization at the time of application. Students may change their advisor while in

the program. Students work with their advisor to design a course of work that addresses their specific intellectual needs and career goals. Success in the graduate program in large measure, is determined by the student's ability to specify a chief research focus and should be done as early in the program as possible.

## MASTER'S PROGRAM

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The M.A. (Master's) degree typically takes two years of full-time study to complete and requires 27 credits (units) of coursework beyond the B.A. (baccalaureate) degree. The normal course load is 3 courses per term (9 credits) Students entering the graduate program with a BA degree earn the M.A. degree before continuing on to the Ph.D. program.

**Important:** Degree requirements should be read in conjunction with the section on **IMPORTANT REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM**. See also the section on **ADDITIONAL POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES**.

### COURSEWORK

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M.A. credits are distributed as follows

- **REL 2710 – Perspectives on Religion – 3 credits**  
This core course must be taken within the first 18 months (3 terms) of entering the program
- **One additional Methods or Theories course related to primary methodological focus – 3 credits**
- **(4) courses in area of concentration – 12 credits**
- **(2) courses outside area of concentration – 6 credits**
- **REL 2000/2990 – 3 credits**  
These credits are devoted to the preparation of the comprehensive examination and the research and writing of the master's thesis.

### LANGUAGE TRAINING

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There are no formal, departmental language examinations for the M.A.. For students anticipating the Ph.D. as the final degree sought, when applicable, an intermediate level of reading competence in a modern and/or classical foreign language judged necessary for research and standard in a student's area of concentration is required for admission into the M.A. program. Additional modern and/or classical language study, as appropriate may be required as part of the student's professional training.

### M.A. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

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Students take a comprehensive examination within the first eighteen months (3 terms) of entering the program comprised of two parts: (1) Students complete Perspectives on Religion and one other methods and/or theories course in the study of religion and submit research papers (6,000 word minimum, exclusive of bibliography), one from each seminar demonstrating command of at least one of the methodological approaches introduced in the seminar or applying that methodology to a problem or issue in the academic study of religion. (2) one paper of the student's choosing is defended at a one-hour meeting before a three person committee.

The seminar instructor and the student's advisor serve on the oral defense committee and at least two examiners come from the Department of Religious Studies. To count towards the comprehensive examination requirement, the paper that is not orally defended is read and approved by the instructor of the seminar and the student's advisor. In cases where the seminar instructor is the same as the student's advisor, the second member of the examining committee comes from the Department of Religious Studies.

All committee members read the examination. The committee may elect to award a "pass with distinction." Upon successful completion of the examination, the result is reported to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and becomes part of the student's official record. It is the responsibility of the advisor to submit the official qualifying form, signed by all committee members to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Administrator at the conclusion of a successful examination. University regulations stipulate that the result must be reported to the Office of the Dean no later than the last day of the term in which the examination is administered.

The committee may allow students who fail the examination to retake all or any portion of the examination in its written or oral phases. Reexamination must take place within four (4) months (one term) of the initial examination. Judgment of the committee on the reexamination is final and appeals must be addressed to bodies outside the department within the University. The examination must be successfully completed within twenty-four (24) months of entering the program.

According to University regulations, a student on inactive status or on probation is not eligible to take the comprehensive examination.

## THESIS

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Students begin formulating a thesis topic with their advisor early in the program. The thesis is an original article-length research essay in the student's area of concentration (generally a minimum of 9000 words, exclusive of bibliography) and may be developed from a seminar paper or as an independent research project.

The M.A. thesis should successfully demonstrate an original contribution to the field, a responsible review of the scholarly literature, critical analytic skills and methodological sophistication, and an ability to use primary and secondary research sources. It should also adhere to scholarly standards in the use of citations, foot-or endnotes, appendices and bibliographies and foreign language resources and transliteration systems when appropriate. Attention to grammar, spelling and proper formatting is a matter of course.

The thesis committee is chaired by the student's advisor and includes two other members of the faculty, chosen in consultation with the advisor. One examiner must come from the graduate faculty (rank of assistant professor or above) of the Department of Religious Studies. The thesis is defended in a one-hour oral examination.

**Important:** When working on a thesis requiring ethnographic fieldwork involving human subjects and informants (interviews and surveys) students are required to satisfy the University's Institutional Review board guidelines on human subject research. It is the responsibility of the student to complete the necessary forms, give the appropriate assurances and comply with requirements. Prior to beginning research, students should consult Thesis Research involving Human Subjects, if applicable. Visit <http://www.irb.pitt.edu>

**Important:** The University of Pittsburgh requires that the M.A. thesis be submitted in electronic format (ETD) Students must enroll in one of the ETD (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation) Training sessions held by the Computing Services and Systems Development (CSSD) in the year in which they write the

thesis. Prior to beginning to write the thesis, students should also consult the online ETD Format Guidelines Manual and Template. In addition to consulting the manual, students should consult the chair of the thesis committee regarding preferred citation and bibliographic notations and other stylistic requirements including where applicable the inclusion of appendices, glossaries, graphics and illustrations, standard foreign language transliteration systems and diacritics, foreign language scripts and translation rules.

Electronic Theses and Dissertations: <http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/>

Theses and Dissertation Templates: <http://training.ccssd.pitt.edu/thesisdissertationtemplates.htm>

Formal Guidelines for Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Preparation:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/formatguidelineshtml.html>

ETD Training and Manual <http://technology.pitt.edu/Students.aspx?mp=2&body=etd/etd.html>

When the thesis advisor agrees that the thesis is ready to be defended, the oral defense is scheduled through the Department Administrator at a time mutually convenient for all committee members during regular business hours. The student is responsible for distributing copies of the thesis to all committee members. The committee has two weeks to read the thesis.

The committee may elect to award a “pass with distinction” Once all members of the committee have approved the thesis in its final form, the result is reported to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and becomes part of the student’s official record. It is the responsibility of the chair of the committee to submit the official qualifying form, signed by all committee members to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Departmental Administrator at the conclusion of a successful defense.

Students may be asked to rewrite portions of the thesis and to resubmit those portion or the full manuscript for reevaluation by the entire committee or to a member or members of the committee designated by the committee. The committee may also ask the student to defend the thesis at a second oral defense. Judgment of the committee is final and appeals must be addressed to bodies outside the department within the University.

Students may register for 1-3 credits of Independent study (REL 2990) while researching and writing the thesis. They must register for at least one credit of Master’s Thesis (REL 2000) in the term they expect to defend the thesis and graduate. Failure to register will result in the student having to apply for readmission into the program prior to defending the thesis and graduating.

**Important:** Requirements for the M.A. degree should be completed within a period of four (4) consecutive years from the student’s initial registration for graduate study. There is also a strictly enforced limit of four calendar years on the M.A. comprehensive examination for students beginning or readmitted for graduate study in Fall 2002 or later.

## **GRADUATION**

**Important:** Graduation is not automatic. Students are responsible for applying for graduation by the deadline set by the Dean’s Office in the term in which they anticipate a degree, for properly formatting submitting the thesis to the Dean’s Office by the deadline for graduation and for paying all fees relating to graduation. All candidates for graduation must file an official Application for Graduation in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies early in the term in which graduation is expected.

Graduating in a term subsequent to the term in which a student defends typically results in additional fees (1 credit of REL 2000) When anticipating a defense date, students therefore are reminded to leave enough time between the thesis defense and the deadline for submission of the thesis to make necessary

post-defense substantive and formal changes to the thesis to meet the submission deadline for graduation.

For important dates, forms and policies for applying for graduation visit:

[http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/graduation\\_forms.php](http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/graduation_forms.php)

According to University regulations, a student on inactive status or on probation is not eligible to sit for the oral defense or to graduate.

## **CONTINUING IN THE PH.D. PROGRAM**

The Ph.D. Admissions Committee reviews students continuing beyond the M.A. in religious studies earned at the University of Pittsburgh and students entering with a Master's degree in religious studies or a cognate discipline from another institution. M.A. students interested in continuing in the Ph.D. program should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies early in the second year of M.A. study.

## **DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

The Ph.D. Program requires 48 credits beyond the M.A. degree (72 credits beyond the B.A.) The normal course load is 3 courses per term (9 credits). Students are expected to complete the Ph.D. degree with eight years of entering the graduate program.

Students entering the Ph.D. program with a master's degree in religious studies, a cognate discipline or theology from another institution may have up to 24 credits at the master's level applied toward the Ph.D. degree. Transfer credits require a grade of "B" or better (or the equivalent) and must be for work germane to the M.A. degree in religious studies. The acceptance of transfer credits is determined at a meeting between the incoming student and the Director of Graduate Studies during the first term of residency. Students entering the Ph.D. program from another institution meet departmental course work distribution requirements for the M.A. degree (save for the thesis) in the course of earning the Ph.D. degree.

**Important:** Degree requirements should be read in conjunction with the section on **IMPORTANT REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM**. See also, the section on **ADDITIONAL POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES**.

## **COURSEWORK**

Ph.D. credits are distributed as follows:

- **REL 2710 – Perspectives on Religion – 3 credits**  
All Ph.D. graduate students entering from another institution must take this course within the first 18 months (3 terms) of entering the program.
- **Two methods or theories courses – 6 credits**  
These courses are related to the student's primary or complementary methodological focus; one of these courses (3 credits) is earned at the M.A. level.
- **Ten specialization courses – 30 credits**  
Four of these courses (12 credits) are earned at the M.A. level.
- **Two courses in each of two other religious traditions or contexts - 12 credits**  
These courses are from two areas other than the student's area of specialization. Two of these courses (6 credits) are earned at the M.A. level.

- **Twenty-one (21) elective credits**

Including courses devoted to the preparation of qualifying examinations, advanced language training, the preparation of the dissertation prospectus and the research and writing of the dissertation (21 credits). OF these 21 credits, no more than 6 credits may be taken as REL 3990 and/or 3000 or be outstanding when sitting for the dissertation overview and no more than 3 credits may be outstanding when applying for admission to candidacy.

## **PH.D. PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**

The preliminary examination is required of students who enter the Ph.D. program with a master's degree from another institution. See the comprehensive examination in the M.A. program.

The preliminary examination is waived only for the students who have earned an M.A. in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Their advisor is responsible for submitting the official Ph.D. preliminary examination qualifying form signed by all members of the students M.A. comprehensive examination, to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Administrator within the first term of the student's acceptance into the Ph.D. program.

According to University regulations, a student on inactive status or on probation is not eligible to take the preliminary examination.

## **LANGUAGE EXAMINATIONS**

This section discusses the modern language examinations required of all students. When applicable, an intermediate or advanced level of competency in modern and/or classical foreign languages judged necessary for research and standard in a student's area of specialization is required for admission into the program. Additional modern and/or classical language study, as appropriate may be required as part of the student's professional training.

Verification of reading knowledge of two modern languages is required. Determination of those languages is made on the basis of research needs and professional expectations in the student's area of specialization. Students whose research primarily involves English-language sources or one language of research must still satisfy the two modern language requirements. In those instances French and/or German are typically required. Students pass one of the language requirements by the end of the third semester of residency and must complete both language requirements prior to sitting for the comprehensive examination.

Language requirements may be satisfied by one of the following:

- Passing a written examination on materials related to the student's primary area of specialization administered by an approved examiner
- Securing a letter from a faculty member with whom the student has done substantive work in the language of specialization indicating that the student is capable of doing independent dissertation research in said language
- Passing a written examination in an approved modern language in the process of earning an M.A. degree at another institution within three years prior to entering the Ph.D. program.

- Submitting a research paper(s) written while in the graduate program or within three years prior to enter the Ph.D. program that demonstrate a substantial amount of original translation of secondary sources in a modern language (or languages) of research and/or uses a substantial amount of secondary source material in a modern to the satisfaction of an approved faculty member.
- Being a native speaker of a language other than English that is directly related to the research area of specialization.
- Scoring in the upper 20<sup>th</sup> percentile on the Princeton Educational Testing Service Examination (applicable to French, German, Russian, and Spanish)
- Earning a B or better in both terms of the specially designated French and/or German reading courses offered by those departments.

A letter indicating the language to be tested and the method of examination, signed by the student's advisor must be submitted to the Curriculum Committee for approval through the Director of Graduate Studies prior to arranging for each exam or otherwise fulfilling a language requirement. The Curriculum Committee meets in October and March of each year. All materials must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies by October 1 and March 1 for consideration in the cycle.

It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for the administration of a language examination and to have the results of an examination reported in writing by the examiner to the Director of Graduate Studies within one week of completing an examination. In all cases where the qualifying method is not an examination, the student is responsible for submitting the appropriate paperwork and having appropriate letters submitted by appropriate faculty members or examiners when a language requirement has been fulfilled.

***Guidelines for sitting for a language exam with an examiner from the Department of Religious Studies:***

In consultation with an approved examiner and the student's advisor, a selection is made of an article(s) or book chapter(s) (25-40 pages of text) in the student's area of specialization on which the student will be tested. There are two parts in the exam. Each part consists of a short passage chosen by the examiner and taken from the above material. These passages are not disclosed to the student prior to sitting for the exam. Each part is 30 minutes and is taken on the same day. Dictionaries may be used in Part One; for Part Two, no dictionaries are permitted. The examiner and student may agree beforehand on the 50% of the material from which Part One will be taken and the 50% of the material from which Part Two will draw. Exams are graded on a pass/fail basis.

***Important:*** Elementary and intermediate level language courses, including French and German sequences do not count towards the Ph.D. degree. Upper-division language courses that deal with substantive materials related to religious studies may count towards the degree.

## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

Students take the comprehensive examination upon completing all required coursework (save for a maximum of 6 credits of REL 3990 and/or REL 3000 to count towards degree requirements) and passing the preliminary examination and language requirements. The exam serves as a line of demarcation between the general professional training and independent scholarly research. It is designed to test for both breadth and depth in the student's area of specialization and intended research by evaluating the student's critical abilities in three fields that impact the dissertation. Its objective is a demonstration of the ability to reflect awareness of existing methodologies and scholarship in particular fields, conceptualize and organize a received body of scholarship, and think and write clearly and coherently.



The examination is chaired by the student's advisor and includes two other faculty examiners, one of whom must come from the graduate faculty of the Cooperative Program in Religion. In most instances, the chair of the comprehensive examination serves as the chair of the subsequent dissertation committee and the comprehensive examination examiners serve as members of the doctoral committee. Student may elect a four-member committee; in such cases, the fourth member serves as a reader only.

The comprehensive examination is comprised of three written field examinations and a two-hour oral defense. In consultation with and approval of the advisor (aka committee chair), students select the additional members of the committee and the three fields of examination. Students prepare a comprehensive examination proposal comprised of four sections, each 4-5 pages (1200-1500 words) in length, exclusive of bibliography.

- In consultation with the committee chair, an overall statement outlining the objectives of the examination, including justification of the three fields and their relation to one another, and to projected dissertation research and methodology.
- In consultation with each field examiner, three separate statements detailing the objectives of each field examination. Each field includes a reading list of a minimum of 25-30 major works or the equivalent, representing the best and current scholarship in the areas of examination. At the discretion of the examiner, the bibliography may include contemporary scholarship other than in English.

The comprehensive proposal and ensuing examination should reflect key issues and/or approaches related to the student's area of specialization and dissertation research focus balanced for breadth and depth, and demonstrate the student's mastery of the textual, contextual and scholarly status of the proposed research project. Methodology may or may not be one of the fields proper; however, materials related to methodology are represented in each field examination.

Students may use 1-3 credits of REL 3990 (Independent Study, S/N grade) to prepare for the comprehensive examination.

Once all examiners have approved the proposal and bibliography for their respective fields, the chair of the committee approves the complete proposal, including the overall statement. The proposal, along with a letter of support by the chair is submitted to the Curriculum Committee through the Director of Graduate Studies. The Curriculum Committee may approve the prospectus or recommend changes and request to re-examine the proposal before final approval. The Curriculum Committee meets in October and March of each year. All materials must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies by October 1 or March 1 for consideration in that cycle.

Upon notification of approval of the proposal by the Curriculum Committee, the student arranges, based on the availability of the Departmental Administration and all committee members, to sit for the exams and the oral defense. Students must sit for the comprehensive exam by the end of the cycle in which the proposal is approved by the Curriculum Committee (e.g. proposal in October, must be complete by March 31<sup>st</sup> of the following calendar year;; proposals approved in March must be completed by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the same calendar year.) Should this condition not be met, proposals must be resubmitted by approval to the Curriculum Committee with explanation.

The examination for each field takes place on a separate day within five (5) business days during regular business hours; the questions on the exam are not disclosed beforehand to the student and the student has four (4) hours in which to write each examination on a department provided computer. The two (2) hour oral defense takes place within five (5) business days of the last written field exam.

All examiners read the three field exams. The committee may elect to award a “pass with distinction”. Upon successful completion of the examination, the result is reported to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and becomes part of the student’s official record. It is the responsibility of the chair of the committee to submit the official qualifying form, signed by all committee members to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Administrator at the conclusion of a successful examination. University regulations stipulate that the result must be reported to the Office of the Dean no later than the last day of the term in which the examination is administered.

The committee may allow students who fail the examination to retake all or any portion of the examination in its written or oral phase. Reexamination must take place within four (4) months of the initial examination. Judgment of the committee is final and appeals must be addressed to bodies outside the department within the University.

University regulations stipulate that the comprehensive examination must be taken at least eight (8) months prior to the dissertation defense. In no case may the comprehensive examination be taken in the same term in which the student is to graduate.

### **Exemption of one of the three (3) examination fields:**

An article-length publication that has been officially accepted for publication or published in an approved refereed academic journal or edited volume may serve as a waiver of one of the three comprehensive examination fields. The article, generally a minimum of 6000 words exclusive of bibliography, must have been approved for publication after entering the Ph.D. program, and be directed related to the dissertation. The article, notification of publication commitment and letter of support by the student’s advisor are sent to the Curriculum Committee through the Director of Graduate Studies for approval. These materials should accompany the submission of the comprehensive examination proposal. The same publication may be used to meet the requirement of a language examination, when applicable. Only one field exam may be waived.

Students applying for an exemption of one of the comprehensive examination fields submit a complete comprehensive examination proposal consisting of three comprehensive field exams and overall statement as outlined above. Once the proposal and the petition have been approved by the Curriculum Committee, the chair of the committee, in consultation with other examiners, makes the determination on which field exam is waived.

Should official notification of publication be received after submission of the proposal, students may submit a petition for exemption to the Curriculum Committee through the Director of Graduate Studies at the time of Notification.

According to University regulations, a student on inactive status or on program is not eligible to take the comprehensive examination.

## **DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS AND OVERVIEW**

Students begin formulating a doctoral dissertation topic with their advisor early in the program. Defense of the dissertation prospectus at a two-hour long overview meeting is the final stage before application for admission to Ph.D. candidacy (ABD status). All coursework (save for a maximum of 6 credits of REL 3990 and/or 3000 that counts towards degree requirements) preliminary, language, and comprehensive examinations must be completed prior to the student sitting for the overview.

Students should begin applying for internal and external research grants in the year preceding the term in which they anticipate sitting for the overview meeting.

Students form a dissertation committee in consultation with and approval of their advisor. The doctoral dissertation committee is composed of four (4) members of the graduate faculty. Typically, the student's advisor serves as the chair of the dissertation committee (aka doctoral advisor) and the dissertation committee draws of the comprehensive examination committee. Two examiners must come from the graduate faculty of the Department of Religious Studies, one examiner must come from the Cooperative Program in Religion, and one examiner must come from outside the Department of Religious Studies but within the University. All University examiners must be members of the graduate faculty. Students, in consultation with their advisor, may select a five-member committee. The fifth member may be a lecturer or have adjunct status in the Department of Religious Studies but need not be a member of the graduate faculty.

Students desiring to have a faculty member of another institution serve on the dissertation committee must secure the approval of the Ph.D. program. The request for approval should include a cover letter briefly outlining the project and justifying the appointment of the outside committee member, a letter of support from the student's advisor and a current curriculum vita of the outside committee member. The request is placed on the agenda for consideration at the next scheduled meeting after petition is made by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. Students are responsible for all costs relating to the participation of an outside committee member.

The prospectus, prepared under the supervision of the doctoral advisor, is a carefully worded document with working title, approximately 10-15 pages (3000-4500 words) in length, exclusive of bibliography and addresses the following:

- Description/Purpose of the project
- Research design and methodology
- Significance
- Scope and contribution to the field
- Sources
- Anticipated outcome(s)

The prospectus, together with its appended bibliography, should demonstrate that the students has done sufficient preliminary research on the proposed dissertation topic to critically assess its viability and potential place in the field and to map out a strategy for completion, including identifying research sites. It is recommended that a working chapter outline be included with as a part of the prospectus paper or as an appendix.

Students may use 1-3 credits of REL 3990 (independent Study, S/N grade option) for preparation of the prospectus.

Once the doctoral advisor approves the prospectus and agrees that it is ready to be presented at the overview meeting, the student is responsible for distributing copies of the prospectus to the members of the dissertation committee and arrangements are made through the Department Administrator to schedule the overview meeting. The overview takes place at a time convenient to all committee members during regular business hours. The committee has two weeks to read the prospectus. The dissertation committee may approve the prospectus, recommend changes, or may ask that a revised proposal be approved by the entire committee or select members of the committee and/or a second overview meeting before final approval.

When the committee approves the prospectus in its final form, the result is reported to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and becomes part of the student's official record. It is the responsibility of the doctoral advisor to submit the official qualifying form, signed by all committee members to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Departmental Advisor at the conclusion of a successful overview.

Within two (2) weeks of passing the overview, students submit the approved prospectus to the Director Graduate Studies. The prospectus should include the title of the dissertation and the name, rank and department of the doctoral advisor and all committee members.

According to University regulations, a student on inactive status or on probation is not eligible to sit for the dissertation overview.

## **ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY FOR DOCTORAL DEGREE**

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Admission to candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy degree constitutes a promotion of the student to the most advanced stage of graduate study and provides formal approval to devote essentially exclusive attention to the research and the writing of the dissertation. To qualify for admission to candidacy, students must fulfill the following requirements: be in full graduate status, have satisfied the requirement of the preliminary evaluation, have completed formal course work with a minimum quality point average of 3.00, have satisfied two modern language requirements, have passed the comprehensive examination, have received approval of the proposed subject and plan of the dissertation from the doctoral committee following an overview meeting of the committee. No more than 3 credits of REL 3990 and/or REL 3000 (S/N grade) that count toward degree requirements may be outstanding at the time of admission to candidacy.

**Important:** Students must apply for admission to candidacy. Upon passing the overview, or as promptly as possible and no later than 8 months prior to the oral defense of the dissertation, students submit an **Application for Admission to Candidacy For Doctoral Degree** to the Dean's Office through the Director of Graduate Studies. The form is available through the Department Administrator. Written notification from the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies of admission to candidacy, which includes approval of the composition of the doctoral committee, indicates that the student is formally admitted to Ph.D. candidacy (ABD status).

Should the composition of the dissertation committee change after the student has been admitted to candidacy, the doctoral advisor must send a letter to the Dean of Graduate Studies, co-signed by the department chair, through the director of graduate studies requesting the change.

## **DISSERTATION**

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The doctoral dissertation is an independent, original and significant contribution to knowledge, grounded in an appropriate body of primary and secondary sources. Successful completion of the dissertation signifies the preparation of the author to assume a position within the profession. University guidelines stipulate that the dissertation must be relevant to an identifiable field in religious studies as it is currently practiced, present a hypothesis tested by data and analysis, and provide a significant contribution or advancement in that field. The dissertation demonstrates the establishment of a historical context for the presentation of an innovative and creative approach to the problem of analysis and solution, a clear understanding of the problem area as revealed by analysis and synthesis of a broad literature base, a well-defined research design, clarity in composition, and careful documentation. The successful dissertation is of sufficient merit to warrant publication of its research and results in refereed journals, or form the basis of a book or monograph, and of sufficient detail so that other scholars can build on it in subsequent work.

Students should apply for dissertation write-up grants in the year preceding the final year of dissertation research.

**Important:** When working on a doctoral dissertation requiring ethnographic fieldwork involving human subjects and informants (interviews and surveys) students are required to satisfy the University's Institutional review Board guidelines on human subject research. It is the responsibility of the student to complete the necessary forms, give the appropriate assurances and comply with the requirements. Prior to beginning research, students should consult Thesis Research Involving Human Subjects, if applicable. Visit <http://www.irb.pitt.edu>

**Important:** The University of Pittsburgh requires that the doctoral dissertation be submitted in electronic format (ETD). Students must enroll on one of the ETD (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation training sessions held by Computing Services and Systems Development (CSSD) in the year in which they write their dissertation. Prior to writing the dissertation, students should also consult their online ETD format guidelines Manual and Template. In addition to consulting the manual, student the consult the doctoral advisor regarding preferred citation and bibliographic notation and other stylistic requirements including, where applicable, the inclusion of appendices, glossaries, graphics and illustrations, standard foreign language transliteration systems and diacritics, foreign language scripts and translation rules.

Electronic Theses and Dissertations: <http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/>

Theses and Dissertation Templates: <http://training.cssd.pitt.edu/thesisdissertationtemplates.htm>

Formal Guidelines for Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Preparation:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/formatguidelineshtml.html>

ETD Training and Manual <http://technology.pitt.edu/Students.aspx?mp=2&body=etd/etd.html>

**Important:** The University requires that students who are admitted to Ph.D. candidacy meet at least once a year with their dissertation committee to formally report on progress toward the degree and discuss objectives for the following year and a timetable for completing degree requirements. These meetings are typically scheduled in February of each year. It is the responsibility of the student to canvass the dissertation committee in January to set up a mutually convenient date and time for the review. The student submits a written report outlining the progress during the preceding year and expectation for the upcoming year to all members of the dissertation committee two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting. When applicable, draft chapters should be circulated to all readers at that time so as to receive advice and input from all members as the project develops. Students are required to submit a written report on the results of the annual meeting to the Director of Graduate Studies signed by the doctoral advisor within two (2) weeks of the review by their committee.

Students may use a maximum of three (3) credits of REL 3990 that count towards degree requirements to research and write the dissertation. REL 3000 is reserved for the final stages of the dissertation and for the term in which a student defends the dissertation and graduates. University requirements further stipulate that students **must** be registered for at least one (1) credit of Independent Study (REL 3990) per year while research and writing the dissertation and for at least one (1) credit of Dissertation Research (REL 3000) in the term(s) in which they defend the dissertation and/or graduate. Failure to register will result in a student having to apply for readmission into the program prior to defending the dissertation and graduating.

The dissertation is defended at a two-hour oral defense. The date of the oral defense is set only after the doctoral advisor agrees that the dissertation is ready to be defended. The advisor is responsible for canvassing the other members of the committee to find a mutually convenient time to schedule the defense; the student is responsible for distributing a complete copy of the dissertation to all committee members. The committee has three (3) weeks to read the dissertation. All University of Pittsburgh defenses are open to the public. The Department Administrator therefore is notified four (4) weeks prior to the date of the defense, allowing for the placement of an announcement in the University Times. Only members of the doctoral committee are present during the final deliberations and vote on the passing of the candidate. Defenses take place on the University campus during regular business hours.

The committee may elect to award a “pass with distinction” Once all members of the committee approve the dissertation in its final form, the result is reported to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and becomes part of the student’s official record. It is the responsibility of the doctoral advisor to submit the official qualifying form, signed by all committee members to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Administrator at the conclusion of a successful defense.

Students may be asked to rewrite portions of the dissertation and to resubmit those portions or the full manuscript for reevaluation by the entire committee, or to a member or members of the committee designated by the committee. The committee may also ask the student to defend the dissertation at a second oral defense. The decision to pass a dissertation must be unanimous. Judgment of the committee is final and appeals must be addressed to the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies.

**Important:** Requirements for the Ph.D. degree must be completed within a period of ten (10) years from the student’s initial registration or within eight (8) years if the student has received an M.A. degree appropriate to the field of study from another institution. There is also a strictly enforced seven (7) calendar year limit on the Ph.D. comprehensive examination for students entering or re-entering graduate study programs in the fall of 1999 or later. (Ten (10) year limits on Ph.D. comprehensive examinations apply for doctoral students enrolled prior to fall 1999.)

## GRADUATION

**Important:** Graduation is not automatic. Students are responsible for applying for graduation by the deadline set the Dean’s Office in the term in which the anticipate a degree, for properly formatting and submitting the dissertation and dissertation abstract to the Dean’s Office according to the guidelines set forth by the Provost’s Office and by the deadline for graduation, and for making sure that sure that their transcripts are in order and that all fees related to graduation are paid. Prior to the end of the term in which they graduate, all doctoral candidates must submit to the Dean’s office a completed Survey of Earned Doctorates. The candidate is also required to execute an agreement with Proquest Information and Learning for the publication of the dissertation on microform and in an electronic format.

For instructions and forms for applying for graduation visit  
[http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/graduation\\_forms.php](http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/graduation_forms.php)

Graduating in a term subsequent to the term in which a student defends typically results in additional fees (1 credit of REL 3000). When anticipating a defense date, students are therefore reminded to leave enough time between the oral defense date and the deadline for submission of the dissertation to make necessary post-defense substantive and format changes to the dissertation to meet the submission deadline for graduation.

## IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

- Courses meeting the distribution requirements are approved by the Director of Graduate Studies

Students entering the Ph.D. program with a master’s degree from another institution meet with the Director of Graduate Studies early in their first term of residency to determine the eligibility of transfer credits. Transfer credits require a B grade or better and must be germane to the M.A. in religious studies.

- Prior to registering each term, students must have their proposed enrollment plan approved by their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Although the University uses self-

enrollment each term students must have an advisement hold removed prior to registration. This hold is removed by the Director of Graduate Studies upon approval of the proposed enrollment plan. Students are fully responsible for any deviation from this plan of study and the consequences thereof.

- Two upper-division (1000-level) undergraduate courses (6 credits) may be taken for graduate credit during the period of residency (M.A./Ph.D.)
- At least one course (3 credits) must be taken in a department other than Religious Studies. The department encourages students to take advantage of all resources available at the University and expects that students will take more than one course outside the department.
- Fifty percent of all course work must be seminar work and no more than half of the course requirements may be taken as independent or directed study. This is known as the “50% Rule”

For M.A. students, this means that 14 credits must be seminar work and no more than 13 credits may be taken as independent or directed study.

For Ph.D. students, this means that 24 of 48 (or 36 of 72) credits must be seminar work and no more than 50% or half of course work may be taken as independent or directed study

- Directed Study (for M.A students, REL 2902; for Ph.D. students, REL 3902) is reserved for students who involved in specialized research for which a course is not regularly offered. Students must complete one year of graduate course work and 12 credits in the Department of Religious Studies to be eligible for directed study.

Directed study is taken for a letter grade (L/G option) and a contract, signed by the instructor describing the course, readings, requirements and system of evaluation is submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies during the first month of the term in which the course is taken (e.g. by Sept 30<sup>th</sup> for fall term, and Jan 31<sup>st</sup> for spring term.) Students should contact the professor with whom they would like to work prior to the start of the term in which they would anticipate taking directed study

M.A. students may register for 1-3 credits of REL 2902 or related courses.

Ph.D. students may register for 1-3 credits of REL 3902 or related courses.

- Students may register for 6 credits of Independent Study (for M.A. students, REL 2990; for Ph. D. students, 3990) that count towards degree requirements. Independent Study is graded on the satisfactory/audit basis only (S/N ) S/N grades are not used in the calculation of the GPA.

REL 2990 is reserved for the preparation of the comprehensive examination or the research and writing of the M.A. thesis. M.A. students may register for 1-3 credits of REL 2990.

REL 3990 is reserved for preparation of the preliminary and comprehensive examinations and the dissertation prospectus and/or the research and writing of the doctoral dissertation. Ph.D. students may register for 1-3 credits of REL 3990.

- REL 2000 is reserved for the research and writing of the M.A. thesis. Students must have completed their qualifying examination and had their thesis proposal approved prior to registering for this course. REL 2000 is graded on an S/N basis and is not used in the calculation of the QPA.

M.A. students must register for at least one (1) credit hour of Master's Thesis Research (REL 2000) in the term in which they expect to defend their thesis and graduate.

- REL 3000 is reserved for the writing of the doctoral dissertation. Students must have completed their qualifying examination and had their dissertation proposal approved prior to registering for this course. REL 3000 is graded on an S/N basis and is not used in the calculation of the QPA.

Ph.D. candidates must register for at least one (1) credit of Dissertation Research (REL 3000) in the term in which they expect to defend their dissertation and graduate.

- Incomplete course work is recorded with a G or I grade. The G grade is used for incomplete course work due to personal circumstances; it must be completed within a 12 month period to earn credit for the course. Students must complete all outstanding "G" grades by the start of an award cycle to accept an award.

For M.A. students, the I option is used to Independent Study (REL 2990 and M.A. Thesis – REL 2000) and is considered complete upon successfully passing the comprehensive examination or defending the thesis.

For Ph.D. students, the I option is used for Independent Study (REL 3990 and Dissertation Research – REL 3000) and is considered complete upon successfully passing a qualifying examination or defending the dissertation prospectus or the dissertation.

- Students must earn a B or better for course credits to be counted towards the degree. Students must maintain a minimum of a B average (3.0 QPA) to remain in good academic standing in the program. Failure to meet this requirement places the student on automatic academic probation. Should this situation occur in two consecutive terms, the student shall not be allowed to continue in the program.
- Students must also make satisfactory and timely progress through the program. Students who fail to do so may be subject to academic program and/or suspension and dismissal. The department informs students in writing of this action. Typically, one term is granted in which to correct the deficiency.

Problems and specific suggestions for improvement are discussed at the annual review and/or by written notification.

- Graduate students in religious studies are typically expected to maintain full-time status. Students who are engaged in course work must maintain a minimum of part-time status (6-8 credits) per term to remain in good standing and to accept a scholarship award. Students awarded full-time scholarships must maintain full-time status.
- Students must be in good standing and be making timely progress in the program to accept a TA/TF award. Students must complete all "G" grades prior to taking up a department award, Students must register for a minimum of six (6) credit hours to accept a ½ TA/TF award and register for full-time status to accept a ¾ or full TA/TF award. TFs teaching their own course are observed and evaluated by a departmental faculty member. The University requires that all TFs who teach a stand-alone course for the first time take Practicum in Teaching taught by the Center for Instructional Development and Distance Education (CIDDE) <http://www.pitt.edu/~ciddeweb/>.



- Students involved in coursework must meet with their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies for an annual review in the spring term. In anticipation of that meeting, all students submit a Progress Report and Academic Transcript to the advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies by January 15.

The M.A. and Ph.D. Progress Report Forms are located on the Religious Studies website : <http://www.pitt.edu/~relgst>

To access your transcript on PeopleSoft:

- Log into My.Pitt
- Click Student Services
- View My Academic Info
- View My Degree Progress Report,
- Select Academic Advising Transcript

- Students involved in the research and writing of the M.A. thesis or the doctoral dissertation typically meet with their committee for an annual review in the spring term.

M.A. students involved in thesis work submit a statement of progress, plans for completion and a draft of work completed to all committee members by January 15. Students also submit a Progress Report to their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies by January 15.

According to University regulations, Ph.D. students who have been admitted to candidacy and are working on their dissertation must meet annually with their dissertation committee. In anticipation of that meeting, students submit a written report detailing progress on the dissertation in the preceding year, expectations for the coming year, and a draft of work completed to all members of their committee. At the conclusion of the review, a written report, signed by the doctoral advisor, is submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies reporting the results of the meeting. Students also submit a Progress Report to their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies by January 15.

- Students conducting research involving human subjects must file with the Institutional Review Board prior to beginning research. Review the pertinent sections under M.A. Thesis and Dissertation.
- All Pitt M.A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations must be submitted in electronic format. Review the pertinent sections under M.A. Thesis and Dissertation prior to beginning research.
- Advancing to Ph.D. candidacy (ABD status) and graduation are not automatic. They require an application. Review the pertinent sections under Degree Requirements, paying particular attention to graduate application deadlines.
- Requirements for the M.A. degree should be completed within a period of four consecutive calendar years from the student's initial registration for graduate study. There is also a strictly enforced limit of four calendar years on the M.A. comprehensive examination for students beginning or readmitted for graduate study in fall 2002 or later.

Requirements for the Ph.D. degree must be completed within a period of 10 years from the student's initial registration, or within eight years if the student has received an M.A. degree appropriate to the field of study from another institution. There is also a strictly enforced 7-

- calendar-year limit on the Ph.D. comprehensive examination for students entering or reentering graduate study programs in fall 1999 or later. (Ten-year limits on Ph.D. comprehensive examinations apply for doctoral students enrolled prior to fall 1999.)
- Under exceptional circumstances a candidate for an advanced degree may apply for an extension of the statute of limitations. Applications are available through the Department Administrator. The application must state the reason for the delay, provide evidence of continuing progress toward the completion of the degree and include a plan and proposed date for completion. The request must be approved by the student's advisor or chair of the student's doctoral or master's committee and the Director of Graduate Studies and be submitted to the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies through the Director of Graduate Studies for final action. Students may apply for a maximum of three extensions, although the third is strictly reviewed by the Dean's office and is best avoided. There is no extension on the time limits for the master's and doctoral comprehensive examinations.
  - Students who are on probation are ineligible for University or department assistantships, scholarships and funding. A student on probation is not eligible to take the M.A. comprehensive examination, the Ph.D. preliminary or comprehensive examinations, sit for the doctoral overview meeting, defend a thesis or dissertation or apply for graduation.
  - See section on POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES for Grievance Procedures

See also the section on ADDITIONAL A&S AND DEPARTMENT POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES.

## **ADVISING & MENTORING**

The Department of Religious Studies is committed to the careful mentorship of our graduate students at all stages in the program.

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### **ADVISING**

The management of the graduate program is the special responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies, who handles all questions pertaining to procedure and student status and serves as the gateway between students and all department committees and the Dean's Office. The Director of Graduate Studies approves course schedules for distribution requirements and handles all administrative work pertaining to milestones (e.g., qualifying examinations and defenses).

Each term, after consulting with their advisor about their curriculum design, students make an advising appointment with the Director of Graduate Studies during the registration period to discuss course schedules and their progress towards degree.

All students except those who have advanced to candidacy (ABD status) meet for an annual review with the Director of Graduate Studies and their advisor in the spring term. In anticipation of that meeting, students distribute an up-to-date Progress Report and transcript to the Director of Graduate Studies and their advisor.

The M.A. and Ph.D. Progress Report Forms are located on the Religious Studies website <http://www.religiousstudies.pitt.edu>.

To access your transcript on PeopleSoft:  
Log into My.Pitt.

Click Student Services  
View My Academic Info  
View My Degree Progress Report,  
Academic Advising Transcript in the drop-down menu

Following the annual review, students receive a written statement from the Director of Graduate Studies outlining the expectations discussed at the meeting and indicating any concerns the department has regarding the student's progress through the program. When applicable, students are also informed of a timetable for correcting problem areas.

The Director of Graduate Studies is also the first person to turn to with any questions about your graduate career and progress and concerns that cannot be adequately addressed by a particular instructor, advisor or committee member.

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### **MENTORING**

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Mentoring students' intellectual growth and professionalism is the particular responsibility of the faculty advisor, although other committee members—indeed the entire faculty—assist in this process. Most entering graduate students come to the department with a specific advisor in mind.

Students are matched with a faculty advisor upon entering the program based on their research interests. Students may change their advisor at any stage in the program as long as they continue to make satisfactory progress through the program. The relationship between advisor and advisee typically continues throughout the student's graduate career and the advisor chairs all qualifying examinations and the thesis and doctoral dissertation committees.

In addition to assisting students with designing a responsible curriculum and serving as the chair of all qualifying examinations and thesis committees, the faculty advisor assists students with planning a strategy for timely and successful progress through all stages and milestones of the program, including developing the master's thesis proposal, language examination preparation, Ph.D. comprehensive examination proposal and doctoral dissertation prospectus. Advisors and committee members are also responsible for mentoring other key elements of professionalism, including grant-writing, conference talks, scholarly networking, teaching portfolios and job applications and interviewing.

M.A. students actively working on their thesis and Ph.D. candidates working full-time on the dissertation meet with their advisor and committee members for an annual review in the spring term. In preparation for that meeting, students distribute an up-to-date Progress Report to their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies and a written statement of progress made, expectations for the coming year, and a draft of work accomplished to all committee members.

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### **GATEWAY TO THE PROFESSION (GAP)**

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The department provides a range of activities and opportunities to assist in making the transition from graduate student to assistant professor. GAP is a "how-to" program designed to fill in the gaps in such areas as syllabus design, implementation and teaching, thesis, dissertation and grant proposal writing, conference participation and presentation, publishing, and job placement, and assists students with building a dossier and preparing to enter the job market.

- Throughout the year, graduate students participate in an ongoing series of informational and instructional seminars led by members of the faculty. Depending on the student's stage in the

program, these meetings should lead to the creation and critique of instructional materials and lectures, research and grant proposals, job application documentation and so forth.

- Students participate in the department monthly colloquium series. In addition to guest speakers, this forum serves as a venue to preview a conference presentation, job talk and so forth and, in general, provides opportunities for advanced students to share their research.

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### **ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

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Grading and evaluation procedures are designed to give students the feedback necessary to succeed. This includes both positive reinforcement of work well done as well as constructive criticism of areas that need improvement. To ensure that students are aware of their standing in the program and to provide advice and oversight, students are formally evaluated each year at the annual review meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies and their advisor; a written evaluation is sent to all students following the annual review. Should students have further questions, they should communicate those concerns.

Students must earn a B or better in all courses that count towards the degree and maintain a minimum of a B average (3.0 QPA) to remain in good standing in the program. Failure to meet this requirement places the student on automatic academic probation. Should this situation occur in two consecutive terms, the student shall not be allowed to continue in the program. Students should be aware that grading practices among faculty vary. Even grades between A- and B may sometimes indicate a problem that needs to be addressed. These problems and specific suggestions for improvement are discussed at the annual review and/or by written notification.

Students must also make satisfactory and timely progress through the program. Students who fail to do so may be subject to academic probation and/or suspension and dismissal. The department informs students in writing of this action. Typically, one term is granted in which to correct the deficiency.

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### **TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES**

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Part of the mentoring process is to provide students with the opportunity to work in the classroom under the guidance of a faculty member. The department has a limited number of teaching assistantships and fellowships to help make this happen. The duties associated with TA/TF positions typically include working with faculty to prepare for classroom instruction, grading, and leading review sessions and, in some cases, leading recitation sessions or lecturing. University regulations stipulate that TA/TF contracts not exceed twenty hours of work per week. Ph.D. candidates also have opportunities to design and teach their own course(s), either through the department or the College of General Studies. Students teaching their own courses are provided mentorship through a required CIDDE Teaching Practicum. Students are given feedback by the instructor of the course for which they TA/TF or by a faculty member who observes the student in the classroom. Students must clear all G grades prior to taking up a TA/TF position.

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### **STUDENT/FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The goal of the department is to train students to become independent research scholars, effective teachers, and responsible members of the profession. Students are most successful when they are well informed, communicative and take a proactive role in their education and training with the assistance of the faculty. An open door policy of regular communication between students and their mentors is essential.

Students are responsible for learning department and A&S requirements and procedures and for meeting those expectations in a timely fashion. Degree requirements and milestones are not “hoops” to jump through; rather they are opportunities to challenge students as scholars and teachers. Students should clearly communicate all questions and concerns to their mentors and make sure they understand the expectations and evaluations of their instructors.

The faculty is here to offer advice and mentorship; it cannot and should not orchestrate student careers or set student research agendas. Students should seek out resources within the department and the University at large to widen their mentorship circle, learn to frame their own intellectual problems and develop their own scholarly projects. Students should also acquire the research skills appropriate to their subfield, including electronic databases, traditional library and archival sources, and language proficiency. They should stay current with the leading journals in their subfield, join professional organizations and Internet forums, and participate in department colloquia and other professional events and conferences. They should develop professional skills in grant-writing, syllabus design, conference presentation, publishing, networking, and job interviewing.

Faculty members serve as models of scholarship, teaching and professionalism. Their primary responsibilities as mentors are to challenge students intellectually, provide constructive and timely feedback and evaluations, encourage students and praise their successes, and alert them to problems in time to correct them. Faculty should meet regularly with students, maintain an open and honest atmosphere, set clear expectations and criteria necessary to meet those expectations, and provide students with their best assessment of the skills needed to succeed in the field. The faculty should further give students opportunities to improve their performance, including mentoring on research papers, theses and dissertation drafts, grant applications, and oral presentations.

See also Elements of Good Academic Advising <http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html>.

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## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Grievance procedures begin with an informal meeting between the student and the instructor, advisor or committee chair concerned. Should resolution not be achieved, the student may appeal informally to the Director of Graduate Studies, who confers with the student and the faculty member(s) involved. The student may request that the Graduate Student Liaison be present or assist at this and all subsequent stages in the procedure. Should resolution not be achieved, the student may appeal informally to the Department Chair, who confers with the student and faculty member(s) involved. Both the student and the Chair may elect to have a faculty member of choice present at the meeting. M.A. students who still seek redress may appeal at a department faculty meeting. Ph.D. students who still seek redress on course- and grade related matters may appeal to the Curriculum Committee; matters involving substantive charges of discrimination or harassment are appealed to the Committee of Eleven. The student submits a formal written Statement of Grievance to the faculty through the Director of Graduate Studies in advance of the meeting. The case will be put on the agenda at the next scheduled faculty, curriculum committee, or Committee of Eleven meeting (as applicable) following receipt of the written grievance report. The student has the right to appear before the meeting to state the case and answer questions, but not to be present for deliberations. The Graduate Student Liaison also may not be present during deliberations. If the grievance is still unresolved, the student may appeal to the Graduate Review Board. When these avenues have been exhausted, students have the right to appeal to the Dean's Office. For handling graduate student matters beyond the departmental level, the University has identified Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies Stephen L. Carr as its mediator (412 624-6094; [slcarr@as.pitt.edu](mailto:slcarr@as.pitt.edu)).

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## **FELLOWSHIPS & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

There are various sources of funding available through the department, the University and externally to assist graduate students at all levels of graduate study. Fellowships are available for full-time study in the form of non-teaching, teaching and tuition remission scholarships; others provide assistance with language training, research and travel associated with conference participation; still others provide awards to dissertators.

The department makes every effort to help our graduate students identify potential internal and external sources of funding based on their area of specialization and stage in the program. A comprehensive list of department, University and external funding and fellowship opportunities is located on the Religious Studies webpage <http://www.religiousstudies.pitt.edu>.

The department offers teaching assistantships and fellowships and tuition remission awards on a one-year and multiple-year competitive basis and may be renewed. Ph.D. candidates also have opportunities to teach courses of their own design.

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### **PREPARING AN EFFECTIVE FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION**

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The department is committed to assisting graduate students with the grant-writing process. The GAP program in part is designed to assist in this process. The key to success is planning ahead and starting early! Students on both the M.A. and Ph.D. levels should develop a research topic in consultation with their advisor early in the program. They should discuss the grant-writing process with their advisor and other members of the faculty and participate in the workshops on proposal and grant-writing offered by the faculty. Many applications are due in the fall term preceding the summer or academic year in which a grant will begin. The annual review is an excellent time to discuss the next round of funding opportunities appropriate to your stage in the program.

For dissertation research and write-up, the standard University fellowship open to competition for religious studies students is the Mellon Fellowship. Other fellowships inside and outside the University are also available to M.A./Ph.D. students and have somewhat different application requirements, but most fellowships follow the same basic structure.

The key components of a fellowship application are the project proposal, letters of recommendations and a curriculum vita (CV). In addition, transcripts and GRE scores are usually part of the fellowship application. Remember that readers are often scholars who are not within the discipline and who are reading a large number of applications. The proposal and CV should thus be written in language that is easily accessible to the non-specialist and in a format that makes it easy for the reader to locate particular sections of interest therein.

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### **PROPOSAL**

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The project proposal is critical to the application. The proposal is a clearly and carefully worded statement of the research project and the work the student intends to accomplish during the tenure of the fellowship in language that is easily accessible to the non-specialist. A successful statement must respond to all categories of inquiry asked for in the application. It is advisable to list these categories when beginning to prepare the proposal, keep those sub-headings as part of the proposal, and make sure that each section is adequately and proportionately addressed.

In general, the proposal includes a project description and working title thereof that addresses (a) the purpose (aims and objectives), (b) research design and methodology, (c) significance, (d) scope and contribution to the field, (e) preparation and sources, (f) research and/or field work sites, and (g) anticipated outcome of the project.

The project should be presented within an interesting, original and persuasive intellectual framework that highlights its leading idea or ideas, methodology and approach, and significance both inside and outside of the field. Readers are generally looking for the intellectual and conceptual strength of the project, its significance to the field or fields, and the preparedness of the grantee to accomplish the project in a timely fashion. The opening paragraph or “hook” is especially important and the description of the project that follows should proceed in an organized and thoughtful fashion. Do not get bogged down in minutia; concentrate on the “big picture.”

The proposal should demonstrate the student’s preparedness to successfully research and complete the project. This can include the student’s substantive, methodological and language training that impacts positively on the project, the work the student has done to date on the project itself, including an awareness of how the project is expected to contribute to the field and any conference papers and/or articles on aspects of the project already completed or presented. When possible, a very brief chapter outline should be considered.

The proposal must also include an explanation of exactly what the student intends to do during the tenure of the fellowship. This should include identifying libraries, institutions, archives, scholars, informants, etc., and their importance to the overall success of the project. If a student plans language study, the anticipated program or institution and the scholarly reason for advanced language training should be identified. If a student’s plans include research, a concise research plan that is tied to the intellectual framework of the proposed project and is achievable within the time frame of the fellowship needs to be outlined. If a student is in the final stages of the dissertation, the proposal should include a concise statement of the work already accomplished and the work remaining to do. If a student is writing, a very brief chapter outline with some indication of what is already written and what remains is in order

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### **CURRICULUM VITA**

The CV ideally should include a listing of the student’s education (and, when applicable, a listing of qualifying examinations passed, titles of M.A. and/or Ph.D. theses, language proficiencies, etc.), evidence of professional accomplishment (publications, conferences), teaching experience, honors and awards, and special preparation for the project (research travel, language training, and so forth).

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### **LETTERS OF REFERENCE**

Letters should come from scholars who are familiar with the student’s project and potential. When asking for a letter of recommendation, provide the referee with a copy of the project proposal, the CV and the general guidelines of the fellowship well in advance of the application deadline. Referees are often happy to comment on initial drafts of the proposal if given adequate time to do so.

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### **PREPARING FOR THE JOB MARKET**

The graduate program is designed to produce research scholars with expertise in a particular field with the concomitant methodological skills and substantive breadth to make them effective teachers of religious studies. Most of our graduates teach in colleges, universities or seminaries. M.A. and Ph.D. recipients in religious studies also enjoy a number of other employment opportunities. These options include work in religious and educational foundations, non-profit organizations, archives, museums, journalism, government agencies, and research institutions.

The department is committed to assisting graduate students through all stages of the job search and with postdoctoral fellowship applications. The GAP program in part is designed to assist in this process. Students should take advantage of these department workshops on preparing job applications and

consult with their advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies and other members of the faculty about all aspects of the application and interview process, including the preparation of the dossier and preliminary and on campus interviews. Preliminary interviews are often conducted at professional meetings. Campus interviews include a more extensive interview and a job talk on an aspect of the dissertation. The Department Colloquium Series is an excellent venue to present a job talk in advance of a campus interview. The faculty also holds mock interviews to help anticipate the types of questions students should expect. CIDDE is an excellent resource for developing effective syllabi and teaching strategies <http://www.pitt.edu/~ciddeweb/>.

The primary source for job announcements in religion is Openings, an online publication of the American Academy of Religion <http://www.aarweb.org/> Students should also join other professional organizations and list servers in their subfields, which regularly announce dissertation/teaching fellowships, post-doctoral fellowships and job openings. Dossiers may be submitted to Pitt's Career Services, which will send them to prospective employers upon request <http://www.careers.pitt.edu/>.

Students should begin to build a dossier early in the program. Students typically begin the job search for an academic position in the fall of the year in which they anticipate receiving a degree or in the fall of the year following graduation. Students in the last year of dissertation write-up as well as recent graduates should also consider postdoctoral fellowships and research grants aimed at assisting developing the dissertation into a book manuscript. In anticipation of fall job and postdoctoral announcements, students should begin putting a dossier together early in the program and complete it during the summer preceding the fall cycle of job announcements.

The key components of the dossier for an academic position are the cover letter, statements on research and teaching, the CV, letters of reference, a writing sample and sample syllabi.

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### **COVER LETTER**

The cover letter should address your interest in the particular position and briefly describe your training, dissertation, research and teaching agendas and experience and how you would contribute to the particular program to which you are applying.

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### **STATEMENTS ON RESEARCH & TEACHING**

Candidates should also develop more detailed statements on research interests and trajectories and teaching philosophy and effectiveness.

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### **CURRICULUM VITA**

The CV should include your contact information, education, teaching experience, publications, conference participation, awards & honors, service to the profession and professional affiliations (as applicable), displayed in a format that is easy to read and understand by those outside of our program. The Education section should include all degree programs attended (with dates and degrees awarded or anticipated), M.A. and dissertation titles, languages of research, and comprehensive fields. The Teaching Experience section should include titles of courses taught or TA-ed with dates. Publications should include a full citation. Conference presentations should include the paper title, conference, location, and dates. Awards should also be listed with dates.

Many graduate student CVs include a section on courses you are prepared to teach. This list should show both depth and breadth and be mindful of the description for the particular appointment.



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## WRITING SAMPLE

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The writing sample is typically a chapter of the dissertation. Choose a chapter that, as best as possible, will be understood and appreciated by a religious studies faculty, some of whom may have no particular expertise in your area of specialization. The chapter should ideally reflect methodological sophistication and research capabilities, and give a sense of the overall significance of the project.

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## SAMPLE SYLLABI

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Candidates should be prepared to send sample syllabi (and student evaluations, if applicable).

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## LETTERS OF REFERENCE

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Typically, three letters are required. Letters should come from scholars who are familiar with the student's project and potential. One letter should/must come from your dissertation advisor; generally, the other letters come from members of the doctoral committee. When asking for a letter of recommendation, provide the referee with a copy of the job advertisement and drafts of your cover letter, statements and CV well in advance of the application deadline. Referees are often happy to comment on initial drafts of the dossier if given adequate time to do so.

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## ADDITIONAL A&S & DEPARTMENT POLICIES, REGULATIONS & PROCEDURES

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This section should be read in conjunction with A&S Graduate Studies policies and procedures. Review the Graduate & Professional Bulletin, Arts & Sciences Graduate Studies, and Graduate Studies at Pitt.

<http://www.umc.pitt.edu/bulletins/graduate/index.html>

<http://www.fas.pitt.edu/>

<http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/>

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## REGISTRATION

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Course Descriptions <http://www.courses.as.pitt.edu/>

Academic Calendar <http://www.pitt.edu/~registrar/calPgCalLst.htm>

Office of the Registrar <http://www.pitt.edu/~registrar/newindex.htm>

Enrollment for Classes <http://www.pitt.edu/~registrar/regregistrar.htm>

Students must have their schedules approved by their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies prior to registering for each term. The Director of Graduate Studies will then lift the University's mandated Advising Hold. Students self register online through the PeopleSoft Registration Module when their assigned registration window is accessible. Registration windows are assigned by academic level according to credit hours. Subsequent schedule changes should be discussed with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students must register for a minimum of 6 credit hours (part-time status) per term. Incoming students are advised to complete registration before the start of the term. Continuing students register each term in accordance with the deadline set forth in the University Academic Calendar. Continuing students who register after the established registration period for a term are assessed a late registration fee. After the start of classes, late registration is permitted for new and continuing students only during the first 10 school days of the term and only in unusual circumstances. Permission of the advisor and the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies are required. During this period, continuing students are assessed a \$35 special service fee.

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## TUITION & FEES

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Tuition & Fees <http://www.ir.pitt.edu/tuition/>

PittPAY <http://student-info.pitt.edu/>

A billing statement is produced as a result of registration. University bills may be paid by cash, check, or electronic check (e-check); however, cash cannot be mailed or dropped into the Student Payment Center depository. The University does not accept credit card payments for tuition, fees, and room and board that appear on bills. However, it has arranged for a third-party vendor to accept American Express, Discover Card, and MasterCard (credit and debit) when payment is made online through PittPAY. The vendor will charge a 2.75 percent service fee for each credit card transaction. Tuition-related payments and room and board payments may be mailed to: University of Pittsburgh, P.O. Box 643029, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3092. Payment may be made in person at the Student Payment Center, G-7 Thackeray Hall. Credit card and e-check payments can be made online at <http://my.pitt.edu>. Due dates are clearly designated on each bill. Failure to pay the amount due (or to arrange an optional payment plan by the due date) will result in a late payment fee for students without a valid deferral. Students who have been awarded a University scholarship should contact the appropriate office and the Department Administrator to make arrangements for paying their tuition prior to registration.

As the University of Pittsburgh is a state-related institution, both per credit and full-time tuition rates depend on whether students are in- or out-of-state residents.

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## FULL- & PART-TIME STATUS

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Students registered for 9-15 credits per term are full-time students. Typically, a full-time course load is 3 courses (9 credits) per term. Part-time status is typically 2 courses (6-8 credits). Students are billed on a per credit basis through 8 credits and for full-time tuition for 9 or more credits. No student is permitted to register for more than 15 credits without specific written permission from the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies. Students are billed for all credits exceeding 15, over and above the full-time tuition rate, at the prevailing per-credit tuition charge. Graduate students in religious studies are typically expected to attend full-time.

Students who have completed their course work and are required by a fellowship or other appointment to be full-time students are required to register for an appropriate number of additional credits of Independent Study to reflect their correct status.

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## FULL-TIME DISSERTATION STUDY (ABD REGISTRATION)

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Doctoral candidates (ABD status) who have completed all requirements towards the degree, including any minimum dissertation credit requirements, and are effectively working full-time on their dissertations register for full-time dissertation study (REL 3990 or 3000), which carries no credits or letter grade but provides students full-time status. Students so enrolled are assessed a special tuition fee (1 credit) but are still responsible for paying the full-time computer and network, security/transportation, student health service and activity fees. Students must consult with the Dean's Office through the Director of Graduate Studies for permission to register for full-time dissertation study.

M.A. candidates who have completed all credit requirements for the degree likewise register for 1 credit of thesis research (REL 2990 or 2000) to maintain active status.

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### **REGISTRATION STATUS AT GRADUATION**

All graduate students must register for at least 1 credit or full-time thesis or dissertation study during the 12-month period preceding graduation (that is, must be on active status) and must be registered for the term (or terms) in which they plan to defend and graduate. Waivers may be obtained by submitting a written request to the Registrar from the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies through the Director of Graduate Studies. The request should be based on extenuating circumstances, e.g., inability of the student's thesis or dissertation committee to meet during the final term when a student has given reasonable notice or the student has completed all degree requirements in a previous term. Waivers will not be granted to students who are inactive.

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### **INACTIVE STATUS**

Ph.D. candidates (ABD status) working on the dissertation must register for at least 1 credit of full-time thesis or dissertation research in a 12-month period. Students who fail to do so are automatically transferred to inactive status and must reapply for admission to graduate study (application fee required) before being allowed to register again. Continuing students on inactive status cannot take the M.A. comprehensive examination, the Ph.D. preliminary or comprehensive examination, sit for the doctoral overview, defend a thesis or dissertation or apply to graduate. Students on inactive status are not eligible to use University facilities.

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### **READMISSION**

Students who do not maintain active status must apply for readmission into the program to the admissions committee through the Director of Graduate Studies. Reapplication forms are available through the Department Administrator. Students who apply for readmission must be able to demonstrate proper preparation for the completion of all current degree requirements. Applications for readmission to A&S should be received in the Dean's Office according to the following schedule: fall term readmission applications by August 1; spring term readmission applications by December 1; summer term readmission by April 1. Students must contact the department and prepare the appropriate paperwork in advance of those dates. Readmission makes null and void all "grandfather" rules governing the statute of limitations.

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### **ADDING & DROPPING COURSES**

Academic Calendar <http://www.pitt.edu/~registrar/calPgCalLst.htm>

Students may add and drop courses only during the add/drop period, which usually extends through the first 10 days of each term. The dates for the add/drop period are listed in the Schedule of Classes and on the University's Academic Calendar. Dropping and adding courses require pre-approval of the student's advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Students who no longer wish to remain enrolled in a course after the add/drop period has ended may withdraw from the course or resign from the University.

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### **MONITORED & LATE WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE**

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After the add/drop period has ended and until the established deadline for the term, students may withdraw from a course by completing a Monitored Withdrawal Request form, available through the Dean's Office and the Department Administrator. The form requires the signature of the instructor, and must be returned to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies within the first 9 weeks of the term in which the course is taken. A W grade will then be issued. This grade has no effect on the QPA and the credits do not count toward graduation. There is no financial adjustment to tuition or fee obligations involved in withdrawing from courses, but withdrawing may jeopardize satisfactory academic progress, financial aid and assistantships or fellowships. The student's instructor, advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies should be notified at this time. After the established monitored withdrawal period, students are permitted to withdraw from a course only in extraordinary circumstances and with the permission of the instructor, their advisor, and the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies; a W is recorded on the transcript. A student who never attends or at any time merely stops attending a course without officially dropping it or withdrawing may receive an F grade.

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### **RESIGNING FROM THE UNIVERSITY FOR A SPECIFIC TERM**

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Students who decide not to attend the University may drop all courses for which they are registered during the add/drop period with no financial liability.

Students who decide to drop all of their courses after the add/drop period has ended but no later than the 60 percent point (in time) of the term may resign from the University for that term by processing a resignation form through the Office of Student Appeals (G-12 Thackeray Hall). Students may process official resignation by resigning in person, by mail or by calling 412-624- 7585, where students may leave a message 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays. The effective date of resignation is determined by one of the following: (1) the date of in-person contact with the Office of Student Appeals; (2) the date of the postmark on the letter of intent to resign (or the date of receipt if no postmark exists); or (3) the date of notification by telephone.

After the 60 percent point in time of the term, students can only terminate their registration by withdrawing from all their courses through the Dean's Office.

An R grade will appear on the student's academic transcript. Tuition is prorated from the date of the student's notification to the Student Appeals Office of the student's desire to resign, unless 60 percent of the term has been completed, in which case there is no refund.

Students resigning from the University should also notify their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

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### **CROSS-REGISTRATION**

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Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, Robert Morris College, the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and the University of Pittsburgh offer graduate students the opportunity for cross-registration in graduate programs in the five institutions in the fall and spring terms. Credits earned by cross-registration in graduate courses at Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, Robert Morris College, and/or the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, when approved in advance by the student's advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, are accepted as University of Pittsburgh credits for the purpose of the calculation of the quality point average and the completion of degree requirements. Details regarding cross-registration procedures are stated in the Schedule of Classes.

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### **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

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Under special conditions, M.A. students may be granted one leave of absence for a maximum of one year; Ph.D. students may be granted one leave of absence for a maximum of two years. The length and rationale for the leave of absence must be stated in advance and recommended to the Dean through the Director of Graduate Studies. If approved by the Dean, the time of the leave shall not count against the total time allowed for the degree being sought by the student. Readmission following an approved leave of absence is a formality.

Students who desire to request a leave of absence should consult their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

## **TRANSFER CREDITS**

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Student entering the Ph.D. program with a master's degree in religious studies or a cognate discipline from another approved, accredited institution may have up to 24 credit hours at the M.A. level applied toward the Ph.D. degree. Requests for transfer credit require a grade of B or better (or the equivalent) and must be for work germane to the M.A. in religious studies. Students should consult the Director of Graduate Studies about transfer credits upon acceptance in the program and no later than the first term of enrollment. Transfer credits requests are then sent to the Dean for final approval. Credits earned more than 10 years prior to entering the program are not automatically accepted.

Students entering from another institution must meet the distribution requirements as outlined in the department's requirements for the M.A. degree (save for the thesis) in the course of earning the Ph.D. degree.

Once enrolled in the graduate program, all course work that counts toward degree requirements must be taken at the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (Cooperative Program in Religion) or an area university with an approved, affiliated faculty member.

## **ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

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Students must earn a B or better for course credits to be counted towards the degree. Students must maintain a minimum of a B average (3.0 QPA) to remain in good standing in the program. Failure to meet this requirement places the student on automatic academic probation. Should this situation occur in two consecutive terms, the student shall not be allowed to continue in the program.

Students who are engaged in course work must maintain a minimum of part-time status (6-8 credits) per term to remain in good standing and to accept a scholarship award. Students awarded full-time scholarships must maintain full-time status.

Students should be aware that grading practices among faculty vary. Even grades between A and B may sometimes indicate a significant problem that needs to be addressed. These problems and specific suggestions for improvement will be discussed at the annual review and/or by written notification.

Students who are on probation are ineligible for University or department assistantships, scholarships and funding. A student on probation is not eligible to take the M.A. comprehensive examination, the Ph.D. preliminary or comprehensive examinations, sit for the doctoral overview meeting, defend a thesis or dissertation or apply for graduation.

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## **GRADING**

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All courses counting toward a graduate degree are taken for a letter grade. Grades of less than a B are not counted towards the degree. The exception to the letter grade rule are courses (i.e., a maximum of 6 credits during the period of residency in the M.A./Ph.D. program) taken as Independent Study (REL

2990 and 3990) and/or Thesis and Dissertation Research (REL 2000 and 3000). These courses must be graded using the S/N (satisfactory/audit) option and thus are not used in the calculation of the QPA required for continuation in good academic standing. Shortly after the term ends, students can access their grades online via <http://my.pitt.edu>.

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### **DIRECTED STUDY**

Registration for directed study is limited to students in good academic standing who are beyond their first year of graduate study and have earned a minimum of 12 credit hours. Directed Study courses are reserved for research projects in an area not available in a formal course. The work must be under the direct supervision of a faculty member who has approved the proposed work in advance of registration. A brief description of the work, signed by the instructor, must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies within the first month of the term in which the course is taken.

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### **INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Students may take 6 credits as independent study during the period of residency in the M.A./Ph.D. program.

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### **INCOMPLETES**

The G grade signifies unfinished course work due to extenuating personal circumstances. Students' assigned G grades are required to complete course requirements no later than one year after the term in which the course was taken. After the deadline has passed, the G grade will remain on the record, and the student will be required to reregister for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation. Students with G grade incompletes are not eligible to take up assistantship awarded through the department.

The I grade signifies incomplete work in courses devoted to preparing for a qualifying examination or researching and writing a thesis or dissertation (REL 2990, 3990, 2000, 3000). The work is considered complete upon successfully passing the examination or defense.

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### **UNDERGRADUATE COURSES FOR GRADUATE CREDIT**

No course numbered below 1000 may be applied toward graduate degree requirements. Students may take two 1000-level undergraduate courses for graduate credit during their period of residency in the program (M.A./Ph.D. program).

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### **THE 50% RULE**

Fifty percent of all course work required for an advanced degree must be taken as seminar work (i.e., regular classroom instruction). For M.A. students, 14 credits of seminar work are required. For M.A./Ph.D. students, 24:48 (or 36:72) credits of classroom work are required.

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### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF STUDENTS**

Students involved in course work are reviewed annually in the spring term at a meeting with their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Students submit a Progress Report and current transcript by January 15.

M.A. students involved in the research and writing of the thesis meet with their committee in February. In addition to the Progress Report submitted to the advisor and Director of Graduate Studies, a written statement of thesis progress, plans for completion, and a draft of work completed is submitted to all committee members by January 15.

Ph.D. students who have been admitted to candidacy and are working on their dissertation must meet annually with their dissertation committee. In addition to the Progress Report submitted to the advisor and Director of Graduate studies by January 15, in anticipation of that meeting, students submit a written report detailing progress on the dissertation in the preceding year, expectations for the coming year, and a draft of work completed to all members of their committee. Within 2 weeks of the review, a written report, signed by the doctoral advisor, is submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies reporting the results of the meeting.

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### **TA/TF REQUIREMENTS**

Students must be in good standing and be making timely progress in the program to accept a TA/TF award. Students must complete all G grades prior to taking up a department award. Students must register for a minimum of 6 credit hours to accept a 1/2 TA/TF award and register for full-time status to accept a 3/4 or full TA/TF award. TFs teaching their own course are observed and evaluated by a departmental faculty member. The University requires that all TFs who teach a stand-alone course for the first time take Practicum in Teaching taught by the Center for Instructional Development and Distance Education (CIDDE) <http://www.pitt.edu/~ciddeweb/>.

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### **ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**

Admission to candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy degree constitutes a promotion of the student to the most advanced stage of graduate study and provides formal approval to devote essentially exclusive attention to the research and the writing of the dissertation. To qualify for admission to candidacy, students must fulfill the following requirements: be in full graduate status, have satisfied the requirement of the preliminary evaluation, have completed formal course work with a minimum quality point average of 3.00, have satisfied two modern language requirements, have passed the comprehensive examination, have received approval of the proposed subject and plan of the dissertation from the doctoral committee following an overview meeting of the committee. No more than 3 credits of REL 3990 and/or REL 3000 that count toward degree requirements may be outstanding at this time.

After completion of the overview, students, in consultation with their advisor, file the Application for Admission to Candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. Students are informed of admission to candidacy by written notification from the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies.

When the topic has been accepted and the proposed doctoral committee has been approved through the Director of Graduate Studies and the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies, the student will be informed of admission to candidacy by the Dean's Office.

Admission to candidacy must occur at least 8 months before the defense of the dissertation in order to provide an opportunity for the members of the doctoral committee to review, critique and monitor the proposed research.

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### **THESIS & DISSERTATION RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS**

Institutional Review Board <http://www.irb.pitt.edu>

Thesis Research Involving Human Subjects <http://www.irb.pitt.edu/Student%20Research.htm>

Students whose thesis or dissertation research entails working with human subjects, including extensive ethnographic work, such as questionnaires, surveys, and interviews, clear their projects with the University Institutional Review Board. This Board is designed to assure that no research is conducted that may result in liability to the University. Students submit their research proposal to the IRB prior to beginning their research. Permission of the host institution (if applicable), a copy of the proposed questionnaire, and a cover letter from the thesis or doctoral advisor accompanies the request. The electronic submission procedure for IRB proposals is called OSIRIS. The IRB Office conducts a question and answer session specifically for exempt and expedited studies on the third Thursday of the month in 211 David Lawrence Hall.

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### **CHANGING THE COMPOSITION OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

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Should the composition of the dissertation committee change after a doctoral student has been admitted to candidacy, the doctoral advisor sends a letter to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, co-signed by the Department Chair, requesting the change.

When a doctoral committee member leaves the University, the member must be replaced unless the dissertation is almost complete or the member has an essential role on the committee. In the latter case, the Dean's approval is obtained. When the doctoral advisor leaves and cannot be conveniently replaced, a co-chair must be appointed from among the core faculty in the department, and the restructured committee requires the approval of the Department Chair and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. If the defense takes place within a few months of the chair's departure, the requirement of the co-chair is usually waived.

Retired faculty members may remain as committee members or doctoral advisors if they spend considerable time in Pittsburgh or the vicinity and remain professionally active. Retired faculty who meet these criteria may also be appointed as a member or as a co-chair (but not chair) of a newly formed committee. Retired faculty who leave the Pittsburgh area and/or do not remain professionally active should be replaced on committees and the revised committee approved by the Department Chair and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

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### **ETD FORMAT OF THE THESIS OR DISSERTATION**

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Electronic Theses & Dissertations <http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/>

Thesis & Dissertation Templates <http://training.cssd.pitt.edu/thesisdissertationtemplates.htm>

Format Guidelines for Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Preparation

<http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/formatguidelineshtml.html>

ETD training and Manual <http://technology.pitt.edu/Students.aspx?mp=2&body=etd/etd.html>

The M.A. thesis and doctoral dissertation must be submitted in electronic format (ETD). Students must enroll in one of the ETD training sessions held by CSSD in the year in which they begin to research or write the dissertation. Students should also consult the online ETD Format Guidelines Manual. In addition to consulting the ETD Format Guidelines Manual, students should consult their Thesis or doctoral advisor regarding preferred citation and bibliographic notations and other stylistic requirements, including the inclusion of appendices, glossaries, graphics and illustrations, standard foreign language transliteration systems and diacritics, foreign language scripts and translation rules, as applicable.

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### **PREPARING TO DEFEND THE DISSERTATION**

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One copy of the dissertation must be submitted to each member of the doctoral committee at least 3 weeks before the date set for the oral defense. All members of the doctoral committee must attend the



examination; exceptions can be made only with the permission of the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies through the Director of Graduate Studies. At least 4 weeks before the final examination, the doctoral advisor through the Department Administrator must provide the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies with a written notice, listing the title of the dissertation and the time and place for its defense, for announcement in the University Times. A report of this examination and a report on approval of the dissertation, signed by all members of the doctoral committee, must be sent to the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies through the Director of Graduate Studies for approval. The report on the approval of the dissertation may be signed concurrently with or subsequently to the report of the final oral examination. If the decision of the committee is not unanimous, the case is referred to the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies for resolution.

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## **STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

Requirements for the M.A. degree should be completed within a period of four consecutive calendar years from the student's initial registration for graduate study. There is also a strictly enforced limit of four calendar years on the M.A. comprehensive examination for students beginning or readmitted for graduate study in fall 2002 or later. If the student has not completed all requirements for the M.A. degree within the time limit on comprehensive examinations for degrees as specified above, the comprehensive examination for the degree must be retaken in order to graduate.

Requirements for the Ph.D. degree must be completed within a period of 10 years from the student's initial registration, or within eight years if the student has received an M.A. degree appropriate to the field of study from another institution. There is also a strictly enforced 7- calendar-year limit on the Ph.D. comprehensive examination for students entering or reentering graduate study programs in fall 1999 or later. (Ten-year limits on Ph.D. comprehensive examinations apply for doctoral students enrolled prior to fall 1999.) If the student has not completed all requirements for the doctoral degree within the time limits on comprehensive examinations for degrees as specified above, the comprehensive examination for the degree must be retaken in order to graduate.

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## **EXTENSIONS**

Under exceptional circumstances a candidate for an advanced degree may apply for an extension of the statute of limitations. Applications are available through the Department Administrator. The application must state the reason for the delay, provide evidence of continuing progress toward the completion of the degree and include a plan and proposed date for completion. The request must be approved by the student's advisor or chair of the student's doctoral or master's committee and the Director of Graduate Studies and be submitted to the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies through the Director of Graduate Studies for final action. Students may apply for a maximum of three extensions, although the third is strictly reviewed by the Dean's office and is best avoided. There is no extension on the time limits for the master's and doctoral comprehensive examinations.

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## **CERTIFICATION FOR GRADUATION**

Instructions & Forms for Graduation [http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/graduation\\_forms.php](http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/graduation_forms.php)

The graduate faculty of the department evaluates the performance of the student. If that performance is satisfactory, a report is submitted to the Dean certifying that the candidate has satisfactorily completed all departmental requirements for a graduate degree. The Dean, after confirming that the overall school and University requirements have been met, certifies the candidate for graduation.

In order to graduate from the University of Pittsburgh, a graduate student must be an active University of Pittsburgh student registered for at least 1 credit of full-time thesis or dissertation study in the term of graduation.

Students must file an application for graduation in the Dean's office early in the term in which graduation is expected. Prior to the end of the term in which they graduate, all doctoral candidates must submit to the Dean's office a completed Survey of Earned Doctorates. The candidate is also required to execute an agreement with Proquest Information and Learning for the publication of the dissertation on microform and in an electronic format.

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## **GRADUATION**

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Degrees at the University of Pittsburgh are awarded in January, May and August. The University holds its annual commencement convocation at the end of the spring term. Students who received a degree in any term during that year take part in commencement. Although the degree is officially conferred at commencement, diplomas are mailed to graduates several weeks later.

It is the responsibility of the student to make all arrangements and complete all forms relative to graduation through the Office of the Dean by deadline to be on the list for a particular graduation date. Students must clear all incompletes to graduate. Students must be registered for at least 1 credit of thesis or dissertation study (REL 2000 or 3000) in the term in which they graduate. It is the responsibility of the student to deposit the final, approved thesis or dissertation in the correct electronic format on time to graduate. As they become available from the Dean's Office (three times a year), instructions and forms for graduation are sent by the Department Administrator to students who indicate that they will apply for a degree in that term.

### **TWO INDEPENDENT DEGREE PROGRAMS SIMULTANEOUSLY**

Students may pursue two independent graduate degrees simultaneously in two different schools within the University or two different departments within the same school. Students desiring to enroll in two degree programs must be admitted into both programs and must satisfy the degree requirements of both programs. Normally, such students should be enrolled for no more than a total of 15 credits per term. The same course, examination, thesis, or dissertation cannot be used to fulfill requirements for two independent degrees, although a maximum of six credits of course work may be used in partial fulfillment of the requirements of both degrees.

### **CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**

Students working toward an M.A. or Ph.D. degree may pursue a variety of interdisciplinary programs leading to completion of a certificate. See, for example, the Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Jewish Studies, Medieval & Renaissance Studies, and the University Center for International Studies.

### **GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

A&S-GSO <http://www.pitt.edu/~asgso/>

GSPA <http://pittgpsa.org/>

The Arts & Sciences-Graduate Student Organization officially represents all graduate students in A&S. Its primary objective is to identify academic, social, and economic problems of graduate students at the University of Pittsburgh, and to resolve them through discussion and collective action. Through representatives on various University councils, A&S-GSO participates in decisions on such matters as reviewing new and existing graduate programs, the grading system, academic and extracurricular programs of the University, policy governing Teaching Assistants and Fellows, improvement in on- and off-campus student living conditions, academic integrity, and student fees. The A&S-GSO has two main functions: communication and funding student activities.

The A&S-GSO provides a forum for graduate students to voice concerns to students in other A&S departments and to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research and other members of the University administration. The A&S-GSO informs graduate students about potential policy changes, upcoming events, and services available to A&S students.

The A&S-GSO receives funds from the Student Activities Office; these funds are part of the student activity fees. Most of these funds are distributed to departmental graduate student organizations in proportion to the graduate registration in the department. The A&S-GSO also receives funds from the A&S Associate Dean's Office for a Graduate Student Assistant who maintains the A&S-GSO office, which is located in 5141 Sennott Square.

All graduate students enrolled in departments of the School of Arts & Sciences are members of the A&S-GSO. A council, composed of one delegate from each department, meets regularly and is the legislative body of A&S-GSO. At a well-publicized meeting, the council annually elects officers of A&S-GSO and representatives to the A&S Council, A&S Graduate Council, University Council on Graduate Study, University Senate Council, Graduate and Professional Student Association, and to other committees.

For more information, call 412 624-6698 or e-mail [asgso@pitt.edu](mailto:asgso@pitt.edu), or contact your Department of Religious Studies A&S-GSO representative.

The Graduate and Professional Student Association is the official umbrella organization for graduate and professional students at the University of Pittsburgh. The purpose of GPSA is to represent both the academic and non-academic interests of all graduate and professional students, and to provide student-initiated and student-controlled services. GPSA is not intended to supplant graduate student organizations in departments or schools, but rather to coordinate joint efforts, promote communications among the schools, and provide a unified voice of graduate students to the University community. In recent years, the GPSA has offered a number of services to graduate and professional students, including Carnegie Museum passes, travel funding, and free appointments with a lawyer. For more information, e-mail [gpsa2@pitt.edu](mailto:gpsa2@pitt.edu) or call 412 648-7844.

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## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

See the section on [ADVISING & MENTORING](#).

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## RELATED LINKS

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### GRADUATE STUDIES

**A&S Grad Guide** <http://www.as.pitt.edu/gradguide/toc.htm>

**A&S Graduate Student Handbook** <http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/handbook.php>

**A&S Graduate Studies** <http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/>

**Graduate & Professional Bulletin** <http://www.umc.pitt.edu/bulletins/graduate/index.html>

**Graduate Studies at Pitt** <http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate>

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### ACADEMIC & CAREER SERVICES

**A&S Graduate Student Organization** <http://www.pitt.edu/~asgso/>

**Career Services** <http://www.placement.pitt.edu/>

**CIDDE** <http://www.pitt.edu/~ciddeweb/>

**Computing & Information Technology** <http://technology.pitt.edu/>

**Electronic Theses & Dissertations (ETD)** <http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/>

**ETD Training & Manual** <http://technology.pitt.edu/Students.aspx?mp=2&body=etd/etd.html>

**Graduate & Professional Association** <http://pittgpsa.org/>

**Institutional Review Board** <http://www.irb.pitt.edu/>

**Office of International Services** <http://www.ois.pitt.edu/>

**Registrar** <http://www.pitt.edu/~registrar/newindex.htm>

**Religious Studies Librarian** <http://www.pitt.edu/~lcohen/>

**Religious Studies Website** <http://www.pitt.edu/~relgst>

**TA/TF Policies & Handbook** <http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/>

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### **IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES**

**Graduation Forms & Checklists** [http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/graduation\\_forms.php](http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/graduation_forms.php)

**Important Deadlines & Calendar** <http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/policies/calendar.php>

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### **FINANCIAL**

**Financial Assistance** <http://www.as.pitt.edu/graduate/assistance/>

**Tuition & Fees** <http://www.ir.pitt.edu/tuition/>

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### **STUDENT HEALTH**

**Counseling Center** <http://www.counseling.pitt.edu/>

**Health Services** <http://www.stdhlth.pitt.edu/>

## MASTER'S PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT FORM

Instructions: All continuing students are responsible for submitting a Progress Report to their Advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies by January 15. Reports may be submitted in hard copy or as an attachment to the DGS. Check preference with your Advisor. When submitting online, write your name and Progress Report and academic year in the subject line (e.g. Smith, Progress Report, 2006-2007). Please ask your Advisor if s/he requires a copy of your transcript. If yes, to access your transcript: log into my.pitt.edu, click Student Services→View My Academic Info→View My Degree Progress Report, and select Academic Advising Transcript in the drop-down menu next to Report Type. This form is designed for easy update in subsequent years.

Important: Please notify the Chair, the Director of Graduate Studies and your advisor of any awards, acceptances to participate at conferences or publications as you hear about them at any time during the year.

**Please TYPE. Keep a copy of this report for your records! Attach a current CV to this report.**

### General Information

Academic Year/Date		
Name	PeopleSoft ID #	
Current mailing address		
Tel	E-mail	
Date and institution of BA and advanced degrees (as applicable)		
Term and year of admission into the graduate program		
Anticipated degree date (as per A&S "degree date sought" near the top of your transcript)		
Have you been granted an extension of the Statute of Limitations to Degree Date? YES    NO If YES, how many?		
Applying for graduation this term or next? YES    NO                      Anticipated term?		
Area(s) of concentration	Faculty advisor	

Certificate or other joint programs enrolled in

**Transcript information for current term.** If directed readings, indicate topic.

Title/#	Instructor	Topic
---------	------------	-------

**Distribution Requirements**

Perspectives on Religion: Term taken	Grade
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Theories or methods course			
Title/#	Term	Instructor	Grade

Four courses in area of concentration. If directed readings, indicate topic.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Grade	Topic
---------	------	------------	-------	-------

Two courses outside area of concentration. If directed readings, indicate topic.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Grade	Topic
---------	------	------------	-------	-------

Three credits for comprehensive examination and/or master's thesis preparation

Course#	Term	Instructor	Grade	Topic
---------	------	------------	-------	-------

**Incompletes**

"G" Grades: List all courses for which you have a G grade. A deadline for submission of outstanding work should be agreed upon with the instructor. Note: All G grades typically must be completed in order to take up a TA position.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Anticipated completion
---------	------	------------	------------------------

"I" Grades: List all courses for which you have an I grade.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Anticipated completion
---------	------	------------	------------------------

**Exam Schedule** (at least one exam should be anticipated or scheduled)

MA Comprehensive Exam anticipated, scheduled or passed. Check here if passed

Title of paper 1

Linked seminar title/#	Grade
------------------------	-------

Committee members

Date submitted and approved

Oral defense passed (if applicable)

Title of paper 2:

Linked seminar title/#	Grade
------------------------	-------

Committee members

Date submitted and approved

Oral defense passed (if applicable)

Old requirements:

Date passed	Committee members
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MA Thesis (include anticipated defense date)

Check here if proposal has been approved	Date
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Title:

Committee members

Date anticipated	Passed
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***Approved MA proposals and defended theses should be on file with the DGS.***

**Fellowships & Grants**

Fellowships, Grants, Tuition Remission received	
Granting Agency	Dates held

Full-time Study fellowships applying or applied for in current and/or next academic year	
Granting Agency	Application Deadline

Language Study grants applying or applied for in current, summer and/or next academic year	
Language	
Granting Agency	
Location	Application Deadline

**Publications** forthcoming or in print (full citation) (officially accepted for publication only)

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**Conference Papers/Public Talks** scheduled or delivered

Title, conference, place, date, funding seeking/received



**Teaching Experience**

TA		
Course title/#	Instructor	Term

Instructor	
Course title/#	Term

Language Training

Languages other than English necessary for research
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**Travel for Research**

Countries abroad in which you have lived, researched, studied, or worked (include dates)
Research conducted away from Pittsburgh (include institution, location and dates)
Anticipated MA thesis research away from Pittsburgh or for which you are or will seek funding for summer or next academic year (include location and dates)

**Professional Service & Affiliations**

Committees
Professional organizations

**Anything about your graduate career/research you would like to discuss at your Annual Review**

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## DOCTORAL PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT FORM

**Instructions:** All continuing students are responsible for submitting a Progress Report to their Advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies by January 15. Reports may be submitted in hard copy or as an attachment to the DGS. Check preference with your Advisor. When submitting online, write your name, Progress Report and academic year in the subject line (e.g. Smith, Progress Report, 2006-2007). Please ask your Advisor if s/he requires a copy of your transcript. If yes, to access your transcript: log into my.pitt.edu, click Student Services→View My Academic Info→View My Degree Progress Report, and select Academic Advising Transcript in the drop-down menu next to Report Type. This form is designed for easy update in subsequent years.

**Important:** Please notify the Chair, the Director of Graduate Studies and your Advisor of any awards, acceptances to participate at conferences or publications as you hear about them at any time during the year.

**Please TYPE. Keep a copy of this report for your records! Attach a current CV to this report.**

### General Information

Academic Year/Date		
Name	PeopleSoft ID #	
Current mailing address		
Tel	E-mail	
Date and institution of BA and advanced degrees (as applicable)		
Term and year of admission into the graduate program		
Anticipated degree date (as per A&S "degree date sought" near the top of your transcript)		
Admission to candidacy (ABD status) NO      YES      Date		
Have you been granted an extension of the Statute of Limitations to Degree Date? YES      NO If YES, how many?		
Applying for graduation this term or next? YES      NO      Anticipated term		
Area(s) of specialization	Faculty advisor	

Certificate or other joint programs enrolled in

**Transcript information for current academic term.** If directed readings/independent study, indicate topic.

Title/#	Instructor	Topic
---------	------------	-------

**Distribution Requirements**

Perspectives on Religion. Term taken	Grade
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Two courses on theories or methods. One of these courses is earned at the MA level. If directed readings, indicate topic.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Grade
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Ten courses within area of specialization. Four of these courses are earned at the MA level. If directed readings/independent study, indicate topic.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Grade	Topic
---------	------	------------	-------	-------

Two courses in each of two religious traditions or contents other than area of specialization. Two of these courses are earned at the MA level. If directed readings, indicated topic.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Grade	Topic

Twenty-one elective credits, including courses devoted to the preparation of qualifying examinations, advanced language training, the preparation of the dissertation prospectus and the research and writing of the dissertation. If directed readings/independent study, indicate topic.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Grade	Topic

**Incompletes**

"G" Grades: List all courses for which you have a G grade. A deadline for submission of outstanding work should be agreed upon with the instructor. Note: All G grades typically must be completed in order to take up a TA position.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Anticipated completion
---------	------	------------	------------------------

"I" Grades: List all courses for which you have an I grade.

Title/#	Term	Instructor	Anticipated completion
---------	------	------------	------------------------

**Exam Schedule** (at least one exam should be anticipated or scheduled)

Preliminary Exam anticipated, scheduled or passed. Check here if passed

Title of paper 1

Linked seminar title/#	Grade
------------------------	-------

Committee members

Date submitted and approved

Oral defense passed (if applicable)

Title of paper 2:

Linked seminar title/#	Grade
------------------------	-------

Committee members

Date submitted and approved

Oral defense passed (if applicable)

Old requirements:

Date passed	Committee members
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Language Exams anticipated, scheduled or passed. Check here, if passed L1

L2

Language	Method of Exam	Examiner	Date
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***Verification form of successful language exams should be on file with the DGS.***

Comprehensive Exam Proposal approved by Curriculum Committee. Date

Examining committee members



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Dissertation Research fellowships applying or applied for in current and/or next academic	
Granting Agency	Application Deadline

Dissertation Write-up fellowships applying or applied for in current and/or next academic year	
Granting Agency	Application Deadline

**Job Search**

On the job market this year? YES      NO
Anticipating being on the job market next year? YES      NO

**Publications** forthcoming or in print (full citation) (officially accepted for publication only)

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**Conference Papers/Public Talks** scheduled or delivered

Title, conference, place, date, funding seeking/received

### Teaching Experience

TA

Course title/#

Instructor

Term

Instructor

Course title/#

Term

### Language Training

Languages other than English necessary for research

### Travel for Research

Countries abroad in which you have lived, researched, studied, or worked (include dates)

Research conducted away from Pittsburgh (include institution, location and dates)

Anticipated doctoral dissertation research away from Pittsburgh or for which you are or will seek funding for summer or next academic year (include location and dates)



**Professional Service & Affiliations**

Committees

Professional organizations

**Anything about your graduate career/research you would like to discuss at your Annual Review**