

# **Department of Religious Studies**

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## **Graduate Student Handbook**

### **2022-2023**

Entering Ph.D. Class of Fall 2022

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**Northwestern University**

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## Provisos and Definitions in the Department

In this handbook, all material in text boxes is taken directly from the TGS website and contains TGS policy current at the time of this handbook's creation. All material outside the text boxes contains Religious Studies policy and recommendations.

**Please note:** In all cases of conflict, WCAS and TGS policy changes take precedence over existing Religious Studies policy. Students and faculty are strongly advised to consult the TGS website for TGS requirements and deadlines.

Northwestern University reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula, and courses.

### Key:

CIC	<a href="#">Committee on Institutional Cooperation</a>
CTG	<a href="#">Conference Travel Grant</a>
DA	<a href="#">Department Assistant</a>
DGS	<a href="#">Director of Graduate Studies</a>
GA	<a href="#">Graduate Assistantship, or Teaching Assistantship</a>
GPA	<a href="#">Graduate Program Assistant</a>
GRG	<a href="#">Graduate Research Grant</a>
GSTS	<a href="#">Graduate Student Tracking System</a>
HRIS/myHR	<a href="#">Human Resources Information System</a> / <a href="#">Faculty and Staff Information System</a>
PTW	<a href="#">Permission to Work Form</a>
RA	<a href="#">Research Assistantship</a>
SES	<a href="#">Student Enterprise Systems</a>
SESP	<a href="#">School of Educational and Social Policy</a>
SLG	<a href="#">Summer Language Grant</a>
TGS	<a href="#">The Graduate School</a>
UF	<a href="#">University Fellowship</a>
WCAS	<a href="#">Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences</a>

## **Welcome to the Graduate Program in the Department of Religious Studies.**

First of all, let us offer you our congratulations on the beginning of your scholarly career at Northwestern. We are pleased you have come to study with us and we are committed to supporting you as you advance toward your goal of becoming a Professor of Religious Studies. We are dedicated to our field and devoted to the teaching and research within it. In our department, you will find scholars with diverse training- in history, textual study, ethnography, and philology. Please feel welcome to call on any of the faculty with any questions. The Department of Religious Studies is a scholarly community, and you, as our newest members, are a central part of the Department.

This handbook is a source for the standards and norms of your graduate position at Northwestern. We offer this as a resource and a guide.

We strive to cultivate an environment that values diverse backgrounds, approaches, and perspectives. Please see our diversity statement in section XXI.

In addition, you will work closely with your advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Mark McClish, and the Graduate Program Administrator, both of whom are available for advice and support.

Sincerely,

The Graduate Faculty of the Department of Religious Studies

**PLEASE NOTE:** Policies and advice laid out here are superseded by relevant Covid-19 policies of the University, The Graduate School, and Weinberg College, including but not limited to rules on visiting campus, in-person gatherings, student events, travel, and adjustments to TGS milestones. For more information, see:

- <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/>
- <https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/news/index.html>
- <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/resources/frequently-asked-questions/fall-2021.html>
- <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/resources/frequently-asked-questions/international-students-scholars.html>

## **I. Introduction**

The Department of Religious Studies at Northwestern University is dedicated to preparing doctoral students to be scholars, teachers, and leaders in the various fields of religious studies and, as these fields share theoretical issues and questions, in the study of religions themselves.

The primary mission of the program is to foster an academic and research environment that trains graduate students to conduct original research in their subfields that is deeply informed by religious studies theoretical and methodological frameworks.

We aim that our students graduate with well-crafted and equally well-written dissertations and with the ability to engage broader audiences in the humanities and social sciences both in teaching and in scholarship.

Their scholarship should position them to be competitive on the job market as area specialists who can engage in methodological and theoretical conversations belonging to the very interdisciplinary field of religious studies.

## **II. Areas of Study**

The Department of Religious Studies trains students in the following fields.

**American Religions:** Robert Orsi, Sarah Taylor

*Supporting Faculty:* J. Michelle Molina, Barry Wimpfheimer, KB Dennis Meade

**Black Religion/African Diasporic Religions:** KB Dennis Meade

**Buddhist Studies:** Sarah Jacoby, Kevin Buckelew

*Supporting Faculty:* Mark McClish, Rob Linrothe

**Latin American Religions:** Michelle Molina, KB Dennis Meade

*Supporting Faculty:* Paul Ramírez

**Modern Islam:** Brannon Ingram

*Supporting Faculty:* Elizabeth Hurd, Sean Hanretta, Rajeev Kinra, Robert Launay, Henri Lauziere,

*Daniel Majchrowicz, Zekeria Ahmed Salem*

**Classical Judaism:** Barry Wimpfheimer

*Supporting Faculty:* David Shyovitz

**Hinduism:** Mark McClish, Kevin Buckelew

## **III. Advising**

Students entering the program will be assigned provisionally to advisers in Religious Studies with whom they have a shared disciplinary attention. Students may change their advisers after the first-year review. Students are encouraged to work with several faculty members over their time at Northwestern University. They are especially urged to consider including on their examination and dissertation committees a religious studies faculty member outside their immediate field who shares their broad research and theoretical concerns, or a faculty in another department. We adhere to a collaborative mentoring model of student-faculty relationships. Faculty resources are here for the students' benefit. Students' rights and choices are respected, and students may appeal any decision in their programs.

#### IV. Timeline

Students moving through the PhD program should be aware of the strict TGS progress to degree deadlines, which are listed at <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/phd-degree-requirements.html#timeline> (and page 81). A short guide to the Religious Studies Department's approach to fulfilling these requirements may be found in the appendix to this handbook.

##### Pre-Candidacy Study

##### **1. First year**

During the first quarter, each student will have a joint consultation with their adviser and the Director of Graduate Studies, in which tentative arrangements will be made regarding course selection, reading lists, language requirements and examinations, second department advising, and preparation for qualifying exams. Students will consult with their advisers regularly about courses and language examinations, and their advisers will make recommendations based on the students' planned courses of study and on quarterly faculty evaluations. At the joint consultation students and their advisers will also decide whether coursework and research will focus primarily on Religious Studies, with some courses in other fields, or whether it will give equal emphasis to a second discipline, in which case the student should seek an adviser from that department and plan a field examination in the second discipline (on the distinction between these two models, see p. 19).

Students take nine courses during the first year, three in each quarter. Of these nine courses, one course should be taken on the history of the study of religion as it developed from early modernity forward (481-1 - Theories of Religion I, generally in the fall quarter of the first year). Students should also take one course on the comparative study of religions (482 – Themes in Comparative Religion). Most students take Theories of Religion II (481-2) in the second year, but it may also be taken in the first year. Not more than three (one per quarter) advanced language courses (3<sup>rd</sup> year level and beyond) that include content related to a doctoral student's research specialization may count toward the required nine courses in the first year. Those advanced language courses can, when appropriate, be independent study courses in which students read primary source materials in their original language(s) with their mentors.

At the end of spring quarter, all students undergo a First Year Review as a condition for advancing to the second year of the program. Reviews are conducted according to the following timetable:

- The reviews take place during Reading Week of Spring Quarter. Students will receive notice of the review in early May of the Spring quarter.
- The review committee consists of the Graduate Student Committee, as well as the student's primary advisor or advisors if there is a co-chaired committee.

- The GPA sends the self-review form to students in early May. This form asks few questions: academic progress, teaching, plans for next year and professional development. Students update their “Academic progress” on [GSTS](#).
- The GPA also solicits mid quarter interim evaluations from the students’ third-quarter professors.
- All committee members review the course evaluations, grades, and self-evaluation material submitted by the student and participate in the discussion. The review interview discussion usually lasts about a half hour. The committee queries the student on her or his performance and discusses plans for summer, the second-year paper, and progress in study of required languages. The committee and the student also discuss which Religious Studies faculty member should serve as the student’s adviser during the second and third years of study, as well as their second (required) Religious Studies faculty committee member. After the meeting, a written evaluation is placed in the student’s file and provided to the student and adviser.
- If the committee approves the student’s progress by majority vote, and the student completes third quarter course work successfully, the student may proceed to second-year course work. In two cases, first-year performance may necessitate a comprehensive second-year spring quarter review:

If the committee approves the student’s progress by majority vote, and the student completes third quarter course work successfully, the student may proceed to second-year course work.

The committee may highlight a student's less than satisfactory progress. Problems may include the following:

- challenges with writing skills
- challenges with analytical skills
- inability to consistently meet deadlines
- inability to consistently make quality contributions in seminar
- incomplete grades remaining on the transcript by spring quarter
- B/B+ grades on the transcript
- problematic conduct and interpersonal demeanor

There are two possible outcomes for the student experiencing problems:

If the student is experiencing two of these challenges, the committee will pass a student conditionally. In this case, the student is given an explanation of the areas of concern with suggestions for improvement. A conditional pass necessitates an additional second-year, spring-quarter review.

If the student is experiencing three or more of these challenges, the student will be placed on



academic probation. In this case, the student has two probationary quarters to re-establish satisfactory standing in the program. After re-establishing satisfactory standing, a student placed on probation will still be required to undergo a second-year, spring quarter review.

In either case, if a student fails a second-year review, a recommendation to award a terminal master's degree is brought before the departmental faculty for discussion and final decision. Students spend the first summer on academic projects, typically focusing on languages and initial research for the second-year paper.

## **2. Second year**

Second-year students continue with course work and also begin work as graduate assistants (GAs). They register for nine courses, including the following.

- 2 quarters of 490 (teaching assistantship)
- 2 quarters of 570 (second year paper research)
- 1 quarter of 481-2, Theories of Religion II (if not taken in year 1)
- At least one quarter of 482, Themes in Comparative Religion (especially if not taken in year 1; can be taken twice with different content). Not more than three advanced language courses (3<sup>rd</sup> year level and beyond) that include content related to a doctoral student's research specialization may count toward the required nine courses in the second year.

Students are strongly encouraged to seek out independent studies in which they can develop research and writing skills appropriate to their specific subfields. All independent studies involve significant writing assignments.

The most important feature of this year is the **Second Year Paper**. Early experience with intensive, directed scholarly research and with writing for publication in religious studies is crucial to graduate formation. The second-year paper allows students to pursue these ends free of the time constraints of 9-week quarters. The subject matter and topic of the paper are chosen in close consultation with the adviser and discussed at the first-year review. If a new advisor is to be chosen, this would be done with the second advisor. Its method and/or content should support the student's longer-term research interests. Students work on the paper throughout the second year but register for only two quarters of full-credit 570. The timing of the registrations depends on the timing of the student's GA work and of important seminars.

The first portion of the second-year paper is an independent study (research seminar (570-1)) ideally taken with the adviser ideally in the fall of the second year. Under the close guidance of the adviser during weekly meetings, the student frames the research question and hypothesis, assembles a bibliography, acquires materials from other institutions if necessary, and begins to

formulate an argument. The student will receive a K (continuing) grade for 570-1, which will be changed to a letter grade after completion of part two, 570-2 or 570-3.

Students must register for a second full-credit quarter in either winter (570-2) or spring (570-3). Students who plan to start in fall and finish in spring should also register for 570-2 (a fourth, P/N course) in winter. During the second full quarter of study, students meet occasionally with their advisers to discuss progress in framing the work, formulating arguments, and acquiring additional sources. **Regardless of their schedule of 570 registration, students must create a rough draft of the paper by the beginning of the spring quarter and complete it by the end of spring quarter. A single grade is given for both full-credit quarters of work.**

The second-year paper is an exercise in writing for publication. Whether or not it is published, its character and execution should aim at this goal.

- The paper should be conceived and written with a clear sense of the appropriate audience.
- The research should be thorough; the bibliography should reflect the depth of work in the sources and literature.
- The paper should make an original contribution to the field, perhaps by use of unpublished source material, and in any event by development of a thesis or argument that adds significantly to understanding of the material.
- There is no mandatory minimum or maximum length, but the typical paper length is 7,500-10,500 words.

During the spring of second year, students are required to undergo a comprehensive second-year review similar to the first-year review. These are repeated until the student advances to candidacy.

Students typically spend the second summer finishing language work, preparing for qualifying examinations, and/or conducting initial research for the dissertation prospectus.

### ***Master's degree***

The Department of Religious Studies does not admit students to a terminal M.A. program. However, Ph.D. students in good standing may request the M.A. after they have met the following criteria, usually during the second year:

- 5 quarters of residency
- Successful completion of the two-quarter Religious Studies research paper (570-1, 2 or 3)

- 11 other courses graded ABC/NC

For students leaving the program with an M.A., no language or qualifying examinations are required.

**Students are guaranteed 20 quarters of funding in their first five years, including summers. We discourage students from going unfunded any time during this period, including summers. Only students who are on external funding or on leave in first 5 years, can bank their university funding for this period. In all quarters (fall, winter, spring and summer) students with funding must register to remain active.**

**In order to receive the Master's degree, the student must:**

- Complete all required coursework and the program's requirements for the degree.
- Complete an Application for a Degree form via TGS Forms in [GSTS](#) and receive program approval of the form by the date specified in the [Academic Calendar](#).
- Complete the Master's Degree Completion form via TGS Forms in [GSTS](#) and receive program approval of the form by the date specified in the [Academic Calendar](#).
- Have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA and no X, Y, or NR grades on the transcript. All grades must be entered and Change of Grade forms submitted by the grade deadline specified in the [Academic Calendar](#).

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/masters-degree-requirements.html>

### **3. Third Year**

Students take qualifying examinations during the third year but may take one or more examinations as early as the second year. While students may take some formal courses in the third year, as much as possible it should be devoted to independent studies in which the student prepares for qualifying examinations, language exam and drafts a dissertation prospectus.

#### **Qualifying Examinations**

The aim of qualifying examinations is three-fold: to certify students in the study of religion broadly; to provide them ample background in theory, method, and content in an identifiable field; and to prepare them to launch a research career in a particular segment of the field. To

those ends, the examinations begin with a foundation in theories and methods and progress to more specialized material. In the field examinations, students are expected not just to know the history of the field, but also to make a strong argument about the material they have prepared.

Flexibility, comprehensiveness, and breadth are the goals of qualifying examinations. The student's examination committee (which may be different for each examination) determines the optimal content for each examination and writes the examination questions.

Normally the examinations are given during reading week, to avoid interrupting either undergraduate teaching or undergraduate examinations and grading. However, during a quarter in which a student is not serving as a GA, the exam may be scheduled during ninth week or during final examination week by mutual consent of student and committee. Students should never be asked to take qualifying examinations during a week when they are also required to teach class or grade exams.

Students and their advisers may petition the department and (if necessary) TGS to either delay or advance the schedule of examinations. Students who wish to delay should be aware that the University deadline for achieving candidacy is the end of the twelfth quarter of registration, which is normally the last day of a student's third summer quarter of residency. Students who do not meet this academic deadline will be placed on probation. In order to allow for processing time, candidacy documents should be filed two weeks in advance of this deadline.

There are three examinations;

- **Theory and Methods Exams**

One-week, written take-home examination in the study of religion administered during reading week of fall quarter (usually from 5 p.m. on the Sunday preceding reading week to 5 p.m. on the Friday of reading week). The exam is posted and submitted on Canvas. Students may freely consult any books or notes while writing their exam. Each student answers one of two questions provided by the committee in each of three areas:

- 1) a problem or trend in the historical formation of the study of religion and of religions as a modern field of inquiry
- 2) the theoretical contributions characteristic of a particularly prominent theorist in this discipline
- 3) approaches to a particular theme (e.g., ritual, religion and the state, religion and political authority, hermeneutics, gender, colonialism, etc.) in the study of religion.

The questions are based on a reading list of approximately 35-40 works confirmed by the Graduate Student Committee and posted on the website before the end of the previous spring quarter. The list is intended as a foundation and guide. Students are encouraged to refer to additional pertinent readings in order to prepare fully thought-out essays. The answers to the first and third questions must involve substantive interaction with at least five of the works on the reading list, and none of those ten works can be the focus of the answer to the second question. Each essay is limited to 2000 words, including in-text references or brief footnotes.

After reading the written exams, the committee holds an oral defense of not more than one hour with each student toward the end of examination week. The result of the exam is delivered on the day of the oral exam. Students will not be asked to rewrite any portion of the examination; a student who fails must retake the exam with new questions in winter quarter. They cannot proceed to second and third field exams before the second attempt at the Theories and Methods exam.

The committee for this examination is composed of the Graduate Student Committee. Samples of past examinations and the current list of required readings are posted on the website:

<http://www.religion.northwestern.edu/graduate/requirements/qualifying-exams.html>

- **Two examinations in the student's general field**

Normally, one exam is taking during reading week of winter quarter and the other during reading week of spring quarter. Of these, one is normally a two-hour oral examination (usually the broader one) and the other must be written (usually the more specialized one). However, if the adviser approves, both may be written. At the committee's discretion, a written exam(s) may take many forms: for example, a paper, a take-home examination, or a seated and timed examination.

Normally the adviser chairs the committees for the second and third examinations. Each examination committee must include at least two members of the department, except in cases in which the examination is primarily in another field, in which case it must include at least two members of the Northwestern faculty. External examiners are sometimes appropriate and must be in addition to the Northwestern members.

Students who choose to emphasize a second discipline in their coursework and research (see below, p. 19) must take one basic qualifying examination in the second discipline administered by their co-adviser in the second department; for others, an extra-departmental exam is optional. The student's Religious Studies co-adviser consults with the co-advisor in the second department to ensure that this examination approximates a Religious Studies field examination as much as possible in its expectations and standards, if not in its format. If the affiliated department has no basic qualifying examination, the adviser, with assistance from the DGS, organizes and administers the external exam with assistance from the affiliated department.

Results of oral examinations are announced immediately after the examination; results of written examinations must be communicated to the student, the DGS, and the GPA no more than one week after the examination.

In the event of a conditional pass or a failure, the committee makes a recommendation to the DGS and the department chair regarding the student's future in the department. Should disagreement about a student's performance arise, it is brought to the departmental faculty as a whole.

A student who receives a conditional pass receives an additional task – usually a paper– with a scope, topic, and due date assigned by the examination committee. The results of the exam are reported to TGS after the committee has graded the additional assignment.

A conditional pass does not constitute a failure unless the student fails the additional task. Consequences for failures include the following:

- A student must retake a failed qualifying exam within one quarter after the failure.
- A student who fails one qualifying examination is placed on probation.
- A student who fails more than one examination on the first attempt is considered for exclusion from the program.
- A student who fails an exam twice is excluded from the program.

All decisions to exclude may be appealed through the DGS. Committees to consider exclusion or appeals will consist of the adviser, the DGS, and member of the Graduate Faculty from Religious Studies who has not been involved in advising the student; in a case in which the adviser is the DGS, a third Religious Studies Graduate Faculty member who has advised the student will be included. The DGS will request a written evaluation from the external adviser to be submitted before the committee considers the exclusion or appeal. Committee decisions to exclude are recommendations that must be ratified by majority vote of the faculty; committee decisions on appeals are final.

In spring of the third and subsequent years, students meet with the DGS or a member of the graduate committee to discuss progress and plans for the coming year; the adviser may also attend this meeting. A summary of the meeting is given to both the student and the adviser, and a copy is placed in the student's file.

Students typically spend the third summer preparing the dissertation prospectus.

### ***Candidacy***

- A student must be admitted to candidacy by the end of the third year of study, which falls on the last date of the 12th quarter. A student failing to meet this milestone will be considered not in good academic standing and therefore will be placed on academic **probation**. Deadlines will be altered in the case of an approved leave of absence or parental accommodation.
- Admission to candidacy is reached by passing a comprehensive qualifying examination, written or oral or both. Individual departments or programs determine the character of this examination. At the time of admission to candidacy, proficiency in the major and related fields is certified and additional requirements for the PhD degree are stipulated. Students should be aware of requirements for admission to candidacy established by both the program and the Graduate Faculty.
- The student submits the PhD qualifying exam form online via TGS Forms in [GSTS](#). The Director of Graduate Studies (or DGS designate) must submit approval of this form before the end of a student's third year of enrollment in the PhD program. Following the submission of the approved qualifying exam form students are admitted to candidacy. Students are notified via email by TGS of approval of their qualifying exam form and admission to candidacy.

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/phd-degree-requirements.html#phdcandidacy>

### ***4. Fourth Year***

Students ordinarily spend the summer between the third and fourth years preparing the dissertation prospectus. Although the University deadline for prospectus approval is the end of the 16th quarter of registration (typically the last day of the fourth summer quarter), the University's requirement that all students apply for major fellowships by the end of the fourth year means that the dissertation proposal must normally be approved by the student's committee during the first two weeks of fall quarter of the fourth year, but preferably by early September. Students are encouraged to present their prospectuses to their dissertation committees earlier to allow time for revision before approval. All departmental and TGS requirements for candidacy must be completed before the final proposal can be considered.

The prospectus should be between 15 and 25 pages in length (not including the selected bibliography and tentative chapter outline). It should include a clear statement of the problem the student anticipates exploring, a literature review, and a statement of how the dissertation will contribute to knowledge in three areas: a particular subfield of the discipline, religious studies generally, and the humanities or social sciences broadly. The prospectus must signal the relevance of the student's proposed research to broader discourses in religious studies and even

in the humanities and social sciences generally. Students must ask themselves questions like the following: what would a scholar of American religion learn from reading my dissertation on Modern Islam (or vice versa)? How would my analysis of ecclesiastical statements on the death penalty help a sociologist interpret opinion poll data?

The student, with assistance from the adviser and the GPA, schedules the meeting at which the proposal is discussed and approved. The student sends the proposal to the adviser and other committee members two weeks before it is discussed for approval. The dissertation committee includes at least three faculty members: the Religious Studies adviser, the proposed second department committee member (if applicable), and one or more additional committee members from Religious Studies. Any committee members who have been chosen from outside Northwestern University should also participate; however, often the need for additional members from inside or outside the university is determined in the prospectus defense itself, and in this case, they may be invited later. At least two Northwestern University committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

The proposal defense normally lasts no longer than two hours. At this meeting, the proposal may be approved with or without conditions, or substantial revision may be requested. In the latter case, the committee may choose to reconvene to approve the new draft or may conduct its business by email.

The student must submit the PhD prospectus form through TGS Forms in [GSTS](#). The program must approve this form online before The Graduate School enters the final approval. Students are notified via email by The Graduate School of approval of their prospectus form.

The University requires that by the end of the fourth year (normally in the fall quarter of that year) all students apply for outside fellowships for research or dissertation writing. Most fellowship deadlines are in the fall. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisers and with the [The Office of Fellowships](#) staff during the previous summer to identify appropriate funding sources.

### ***5. Year Five and Beyond***

The final years of graduate study focus on dissertation research and writing, although students may take particular courses of strong interest either for grades, for P/N, or as audits. Unless the student has won an internal or external fellowship, the fifth year is the last year of guaranteed financial support. Normally students will use the unused portions of their final GA-ship and University Fellowship years.

All fifth-year students present a chapter, field report, or trial job talk at a departmental graduate colloquium. Students should arrange the date for this colloquium with the GPA during the summer before the fifth year.



Students in the sixth year can sometimes find GA-ships in Religious Studies or other departments (see “Teaching”). Students in the seventh year and beyond are normally not eligible for ordinary University funding.

#### *Dissertation Defense*

The dissertation defense—*also called the final examination in TGS policy*—takes place long enough before the University dissertation deadline to allow for final editing of the dissertation manuscript. Students arrange the meeting of all committee members with the assistance of the GPA, if needed. Students should submit the manuscript to the committee members at least two, and if possible more, weeks in advance of the meeting.

## PhD Completion

Scheduling the final examination (dissertation defense) is the responsibility of the candidate and the members of the committee. The PhD final exam must be approved by a faculty committee. A minimum of three individuals must serve on the final exam committee. At least two members of this committee, including the chair, must be members of the Northwestern University Graduate Faculty.

## Filing Requirements and Forms

Students pursuing the Doctor of Philosophy degree must file the following required documents prior to graduation and by the [published deadlines](#):

- Application for Degree: this form must be filled out via [GSTS](#). Students should login to [GSTS](#), click on the "TGS Forms" tab and create a new "Application for a Degree" form.
- PhD Final Exam Form: this form must be filled out via [GSTS](#). Students should login to [GSTS](#), click on the "TGS Forms" tab and create a new "TGS PhD Final Exam" form.
- Each PhD Final Exam committee member must approve the form after the final exam (defense) date. Committee members render their approval by clicking the embedded link in the email they automatically receive once the exam date passes.
- Dissertation submission via [ProQuest's website](#). Once the dissertation has been approved by the committee and all edits and revisions are complete, the student must submit online via ProQuest. The dissertation must conform to The Graduate School formatting standards on the [Dissertation Formatting Guidelines document](#). Once the student has submitted the dissertation online, a Student Services representative will review its formatting and confirm via email that the dissertation is acceptable or notify the student if changes need to be made.
- Change of Grade forms: Students with incomplete grades (Y, X, K, or NR) on their transcript must work with their program/department to ensure the appropriate change of grade forms are submitted to The Graduate School by the published deadline.
- In addition, the University Library receives a copy of the dissertation that may be used at its discretion for reasons including but not limited to long term archiving, library use and interlibrary loan, and dissemination through an institutional repository or other means. The library also archives electronic copies of dissertations to help ensure that the content is preserved for future generations.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/phd-degree-requirements.html#dissertation>

## **V. Interdisciplinary Study**

Scholarship in Religious Studies belongs to the wider world of contemporary academic culture and should be in conversation with this scholarly world and with the larger civil society which attended to religion. Beyond the department's core expectations, students work out with their advisers the distribution of their courses according to their research and methodological interests. The Department of Religious Studies enjoys productive relationships with faculty across the University. Students in American religious history, for example, are strongly urged to take courses in American history, African-American Studies, and Latin American Religions.

Students will determine in close conversation with their advisers which of these options is best suited for their programs. Flexibility is the rule in these arrangements. Most students follow one of two basic models.

- Courses centered in Religious Studies with a minor concentration of 4-6 courses in a second department or Interdisciplinary Cluster, and with the option of occasional courses in still other departments.
- Courses evenly distributed between Religious Studies and another department, with a co-adviser and a qualifying examination in the second department. The most frequently chosen affiliated departments are Anthropology, History, and English, but other affiliations have been pursued. In principle, a student completing the program should be eligible for placement either in a religious studies department or in the field of the affiliated department. *Please note that in this model no degree, certificate, or minor is conferred by the affiliated department.*

## **VI. Traveling Scholar Information**

Another exciting opportunity is interdisciplinary study through the CIC traveling scholar program (including courses at the University of Chicago) and the Chicago Metropolitan Exchange (courses only at the University of Illinois at Chicago). Please note that you cannot use the Chicago Metropolitan Exchange to take courses at the University of Chicago. Plan ahead; you should begin the registration process at least six weeks in advance.

You do not need to complete the semesters or quarters consecutively, and you may take as many or as few courses at the other institution as you like during each quarter of registration.

### **Traveling Scholar Program**

Northwestern University is affiliated with

The [Traveling Scholar Program](#), sponsored by the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC), a consortium of the Big Ten universities and The University of Chicago. This program enables a full-time PhD student in any of the participating universities to register for courses at other CIC institutions upon the recommendation of the student's adviser and with prior agreement between the adviser and the course instructor. Students may register for one class to a full load, during up to two semesters or three quarters during their PhD programs.

**Students who wish to participate must begin the application process at least six weeks before the start of the course.** For appropriate forms and more information, see the [BTAA website: https://www.btaa.org/resources-for/students/traveling-scholar-program/introduction](https://www.btaa.org/resources-for/students/traveling-scholar-program/introduction)

The [Chicago Metropolitan Exchange program](#) (CMEP) allows graduate students in a doctoral program, or in a participating training program that is jointly supported by the Exchange Scholar's home and host institutions, to enroll at one of the three participating institutions to take advantage of academic courses at any of the other participating institutions that are not available at their home institution. The three institutions in the program are the University of Chicago, Northwestern University and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/general-registration-policies.html#travelingscholar>

### **VII. Change of Area**

The program's flexibility allows a student to combine the primary area of study with one or more closely-related others. For instance, an Americanist may decide to emphasize Contemporary Religion, or a Theology student may extend her inquiry to Ethics. Extensions like this can be accommodated easily in students' field examinations.

However, in the rare case of a change of emphasis significant enough to entail a change in area for one or more Religious Studies field examinations, and/or acquisition of additional primary research language(s), the student must reapply to the program in the new area: for example, a student who wishes to change from Modern Islam to Classical Judaism or from Buddhist Studies to American Religions.

The reapplication consists of the following: a new statement of purpose, writing sample, CV (including a statement of language facility), and two letters of recommendation from Northwestern faculty members (including one from the proposed adviser), submitted directly to the DGS, typically by the *winter* application deadline. No formal application is filed with TGS, and no application fee is due. If the student is accepted, he or she may begin work in the new area immediately upon acceptance (normally *spring* quarter).

If the student is in good standing, reapplication does not jeopardize the student's current program or funding. If not accepted to the new area, s/he may remain in the program in the area in which s/he was originally accepted. In addition, a student in good standing who is not accepted in the new area will not lose his or her existing funding if s/he continues in the old area, and a student who is accepted in the new area will continue on his or her original funding schedule.

Students wishing to change areas at other times of year should contact the DGS. Students are highly discouraged from beginning work in a new area of study later than the beginning of the second year.

### **VIII. Language Examinations**

Facility in scholarly and source languages is imperative for participation in global scholarly discourse. Before admission to candidacy each student must demonstrate by examination the ability to comprehend and interpret scholarly works written in one contemporary research language (other than English) relevant to their fields, as well as any research or primary source languages their research requires. Decisions about which language and how many additional languages a student must study are worked out in conversation with advisers.

Language facility is determined in different ways, depending on the language.

- Romance languages, German, Hebrew and Japanese: students must pass the regularly-scheduled language examination at University of Chicago. Religious Studies pays for one attempt by each student in each language to be passed. Exams taken at other institutions, or proficiency demonstrated in other forms, will not be accepted in place of these exams. However, students who can demonstrate that they have passed the University of Chicago exams prior to matriculation at Northwestern University do not need to retake them. Links to the annual examination schedule and the sample examinations are below.
- Other languages: facility in Tibetan, Arabic, Sanskrit, Urdu and other languages not mentioned above will be determined through successful completion of coursework; translation work; or other means to be chosen by the adviser and student in consultation with the DGS.

Normally, students' programs will require competency in three or fewer languages other than English, sometimes as few as one. In rare cases in which more than three languages are required, the student may acquire the fourth language post-candidacy.

See below under "Language Acquisition" for summer language programs that Religious Studies students have found useful and for further information on funding and language programs available through

Northwestern University. Students who wish to take undergraduate language courses in WCAS are encouraged to register early, as they fill quickly.

During the summer before matriculation if possible, but certainly in the fall meeting with their adviser and the DGS, first-year students will decide the languages in which they must develop competency before candidacy and will discuss the need for possible post-candidacy language study. Students should take their language exams as soon as they are ready to do so, from the first quarter forward.

*Provisions for failed examinations:* A student who fails a language examination may retake it at his or her own expense the next time it is offered. If the student is approaching candidacy or graduation and the exam can be administered locally, the student may retake it as soon as the quarter following the failure.

### **University of Chicago: Graduate Student Foreign Language Reading Examinations Information**

Religious Studies Department will cover the cost of the first exam in each language and take care of the registration. At the beginning of the fall quarter, inform the GPA which language exam you will be taking and in which quarter.

Current schedule of language exams can be found on language assessment page:

<https://languageassessment.uchicago.edu/arca-exam-dates/>

Specific information on how the exams are graded can be found here:

<https://languageassessment.uchicago.edu/understanding-the-arca-results/>

PDF versions of previous exams are available:

<https://languageassessment.uchicago.edu/arca/#translation>

Exams within the Asian languages follow a model similar to exams in French, German, and Spanish, although they focus more on language comprehension in reading and providing idiomatic English summaries of the passages through the use of comprehension questions.

Scores are typically returned within 4 weeks; if needed earlier, let the GPA know about it.

## **Language Acquisition**

The following language acquisition opportunities are available to graduate students:

### **Summer Language Grant Program**

Students who have a need to study a particular language for research and/or degree progression may apply for funds to support such study in an immersion program domestically or in the target country. Students must have had some exposure to the target language in order to be awarded an SLG. Details about the Summer Language Grant can be found at: <https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/fellowships-and-grants/internal-fellowships-grants/summer-language-grant.html>

### **Summer Classes**

PhD and MFA funded students may register for [summer intensive language programs](#) without accruing an additional tuition charge. Students can register for these courses by submitting a dual registration form (available at the Registrar's Office or The Graduate School (TGS) to a student services representative at TGS.

### **Courses via BTAA**

[Big Ten Academic Alliance](#) program allows students to take language classes, at any Big 10 school, University of Chicago, and University of Illinois, Chicago.

### **Language Courses During the Academic Year**

Students may take 100-, 200-, and 300-level language classes through the [Judd A. and Marjorie Weinberg college of Arts and Sciences](#) the during the academic year. Students must take these classes as their fourth class in a given term, if Full time status needed. Students beyond course work would take these language courses in addition to TGS 500 registration. All language courses must be taken for credit and a grade. Visit the registration page for information on how to register for language courses and other courses outside of TGS.

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/general-registration-policies>

## **IX. Teaching**

Teaching is an essential element of the education and training experience of PhD students at the university and a central focus of our department. Each student is guaranteed 5 years of tuition and stipend support. The first year is a fellowship year. In the second, third, and either fourth or fifth years, students are required to serve as graduate assistants (GAs), usually as a teaching assistant for 100 students annually. Normally this entails responsibility for 50 students in each of two courses, but in future it may entail responsibility for 35 students in each of three courses.

### **The Opportunity to Assist in Teaching**

Serving as a Teaching Assistant (TA) is a critical part of graduate development in the Department. Although TA responsibilities vary from course to course, the most basic TA responsibilities include attending lecture, leading weekly discussion sections, grading course assignments, holding office hours, and communicating rigorously with the course professor and fellow assistants.

All graduate students are eligible to serve as a TA for any course and any professor. Assignments are typically published during the spring quarter of the preceding academic year. The department may, at its discretion, take student input into consideration when assigning TA-ships. To the extent the department can accommodate specific assignment requests, preference will be given to senior TA's who can demonstrate a compelling reason to TA a specific course.

### **The TA-Professor Relationship**

At its core, the TA-professor relationship is that of a subordinate university employee working for a superior employee. At its best, this relationship is also one of collegial collaboration, mentorship, and tutelage. The goal of both parties should be to make the course as successful as possible.

### ***Basic Responsibilities of Each Teaching Assistant***

Although the TA-professor relationship will vary from course to course, there are a clear set of obligations that both parties must meet. Each TA is thus expected to:

- Communicate vigorously with the professor and fellow teaching assistants.
  - If you are travelling before the start of the class, schedule the pre-course meeting as soon as possible.
  - Throughout the quarter, the TA's should meet collectively with the professor at least once per week. (It may be necessary to meet even more regularly during examination and grading weeks.)
  - All TA's and professors should have full telephone and e-mail contact information for one another.



- In addition to these scheduled meetings, TA's should request individual meetings with the professor if they are having difficulty with any aspect of their TA assignment.
- Attend each lecture.
  - Arrive punctually (as much as 20 minutes early), so that unforeseen problems can be addressed, and to allow for spontaneous exchange with students and with the professor.
  - Complete the course readings at least one week in advance of when they are assigned. This schedule gives TA's the flexibility to ad-lib with the professor if they skip ahead to new material during a given lecture.
  - Decide in advance how each TA will interact with the professor and undergraduates during each lecture. For example, TA's may be asked to sit in a specific section of the room, to "float" during in-class activities, and to help stimulate conversation by asking questions during in-class discussion.

While TA's may also provide audio-visual support, they are not required to do so. Nor should TA's create lecture notes or presentations (unless being remunerated separately by the department for those services).

- Lead weekly discussion sections.
  - Prepare meticulously in advance of each week's sections, including communicating with the professor and other TA's about the content and activities for each week.
  - Create a weekly lesson plan and circulating that lesson plans to the professor and other TA's to ensure some curricular continuity.
  - Record section attendance and participation grades (when applicable).
  - Proctor quizzes (if they are administered during discussion sections).
  - Provide feedback to the professor on how your students are doing with the course content.
- Grade course assignments.
  - Adhere to the professor's grading rubric for each assignment. (TA's should not begin to grade an assignment until they have received clear instructions from the professor on the grading process and rubric.)
  - Circulate your grading trends to the other TA's. Communicate grade averages to the professor before returning the assignment to the students. Alert the professor if there are major discrepancies in the averages that each TA assigned.

- Return graded work in a timely manner. Undergraduates cannot learn from their mistakes unless they have had time to digest your feedback from the prior assignment before their next similar assignment is due.
- Enter your grades into the grading record system that the professor has established (Google Doc, Caesar, Canvas, etc.).
- Host weekly office hours.
  - All TA's should make themselves available for undergraduate questions and concerns for two hours each week.
  - The time and location of these office hours should be well publicized. It is appropriate to remind students of these details throughout the quarter, and to change your office hours schedule if attendance is poor.
  - While TA's may host their office hours in the TA office, they are also encouraged to make use of other public meeting spaces on campus (Crowe Café, Norris Café, etc.) or off campus.
- Learn professionally from the experience.
  - At the start of the quarter, ask the professor when you can offer a full or partial lecture to the entire class.
  - Keep a journal on what you like best about the professor's teaching style. Note which activities work well for certain types of course material.
  - Remind the professor to visit your discussion section at least once, and request formal, written feedback that you can include in your teaching record.

*The following Tasks are inappropriate for TA's. Unless the TA is also employed as a research assistant for the course, the professor should not ask them to:*

- Do regular copying, fetching, PowerPoint presentations, or research for the class.
- Perform any personal services for professors
- To grade exams or significant assignments without detailed guidance from the professor.
- To determine or enter final grades. (Although TA's may calculate final point totals.)
- To run an entire lecture period in the professor's absence.

### ***Basic Responsibilities of Each Professor***

Having TA's presents an opportunity not only for assistance, but also for mentorship and collaboration. By working effectively with TA's, professors enrich both the undergraduate and graduate student learning environments. The most basic responsibilities of professors are:

- To communicate vigorously with each TA.
  - Meeting with the TA's at least two weeks prior to the start of the course.
  - Visiting each TA's discussion section at least once per quarter, and providing written, constructive feedback on the TA's teaching skills.
  - Explaining in as much detail as possible what should occur in each weekly discussion section.
  - Providing guidance and materials for each weekly section.
  - Answering undergraduate questions that the TA's cannot answer.
- To provide detailed grading instructions.
  - Separate instructions should be given to TA's for each graded assignment, (such as quizzes, exams, and participation).
  - Professors' guidance of this process might include rubrics, explanations of grading expectations, and/or grading a sample of exams alongside TA's.
  - Ultimate decisions about grading are solely the professor's responsibility. The TA is not responsible for creating the course's grading policy, nor are TA's expected to resolve grading disputes.
- To mentor each TA in the craft of teaching, including opportunities for TA's to function professionally in lecture.
  - Each TA should have the opportunity to deliver a lecture (full or partial) at least once during the quarter.

### **Conflict Resolution**

As stated above, communication between TA's and the professor ought be regular and open. Even with excellent communication, a conflict may occasionally arise, in which case both parties are expected to address their concerns with one another as each issue arises. Please do not let a conflict fester. If there is a conflict that cannot be resolved between the TA and the professor, either party ought to address the issue with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who will mediate the conflict. If the TA-professor relationship sours, both parties must strive to maintain collegial atmosphere in front of undergraduate students. Under no circumstances should a professor or TA undermine the other's authority in front of the undergraduates.

## **External Resources.**

Harassment, discrimination, and all other forms of abuse will not be tolerated. Such violations of university policy can be reported directly to University officials or to off-campus law enforcement. Please refer to the [Provost's policies and procedures page](#) for more detail. Unfortunately, Northwestern University lacks graduate student ombudspersons. For less grievous offenses, TA's should begin by consulting the departmental DGS and, if necessary, the Chair.

## **X. Departmental Conferences and Lectures**

### *Faculty-Graduate Colloquium*

All graduate students in residence and all faculty attend the faculty-graduate colloquium. They are the center of our intellectual community and accordingly, **grad student attendance is required**. It meets approximately 4-6 times yearly on Tuesdays from 12:30-2:00 p.m. Discussions will be of two types:

1. Discussions of advanced students' work-in-progress (draft dissertation chapters, articles, or job talks) read in advance; the student will spend a short time highlighting methodological issues implicated in the work before open discussion among students and faculty.
2. Outside speakers or our own faculty. Work-in-progress will be read in advance.

### *Other Departmental Conferences and Lectures*

The department frequently sponsors lectures, job talks, and conferences of broad interest to our students. Barring illness or direct conflicts with courses or teaching responsibilities, all graduate students in residence are expected to attend and participate in these events. We cannot always schedule them on Tuesday's lunches, but the department will provide as much advance notice of them as possible.

**Good citizenship will be a factor in determining the selection of finalists for department-sponsored grants and the opportunity to teach stand-alone courses.**

## **XI. Conference funding**

The major conference in our field is the American Academy of Religion (AAR.) It is here where 10,000 scholars in your field gather, discuss their latest research and read papers. We encourage attendance at the meeting. In addition, each subfield has its own meeting. Once students have advanced to candidacy, conferences are wonderful opportunities for feedback on your dissertation work and are an essential element of professional formation. Department of Religious Studies students in the second year and beyond are eligible to apply for departmental and TGS conference funding. Your advisor can help you to propose a session or give a paper at these meetings, which is an invaluable opportunity for you to find a cohort in your area of interest and to meet senior scholars with an interest in your dissertation work. First-year students are ineligible for TGS and are ineligible for departmental funding as well. See below for more information on amounts and qualifications.

### ***Procedures for applying for Religious Studies funds***

Each fall, all students must submit an e-mail request for funding to the GPA by October 1 for the conferences to which they have applied or know they will apply. In addition, their advisers must submit e-mails explaining in specific terms the value of each particular conference for the student, as well as the relative importance of each conference if the student has requested funding for more than one. The amount of money provided by the department depends on the number and dollar amounts of requests the department receives. We understand that conference opportunities often arise after October 1 and will do our best to accommodate new requests made later in the year.

### ***Recommendations for using your conference funds wisely***

- Always register as early as possible
- Buy travel tickets early. Rates are often better for purchases made on Tuesdays, and usually a Saturday night stay helps too
- Double up on a room (this is a departmental requirement)—or save even more by getting a quad or staying with a friend in the area
- Take food along, and take advantage of receptions (the departmental food expense limit is \$50 per day, but you can often spend much less if you plan)

### **Conference funding guidelines:**

Students may receive support for professional conferences **beginning in their second year**. Students in their first year may ask for an exception to attend a workshop or conference *with their advisor*. The advisor's explanation as to why this event is crucial for the first-year student's career is mandatory.

The money comes from two sources:

- All students are eligible to receive up to two TGS conference travel grants (one in each of two different academic years) for *confirmed conference presentations* during their time in the program. It is wise to use these grants for more expensive, distant conferences. TGS grant applications must be made 30 days in advance of the conference:  
<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/fellowships-and-grants/internal-fellowships-grants/conference-travel-grant.html>
- Advanced students who have exhausted their TGS conference funding may still receive up to \$400 in TGS professional development funds to attend a conference for job interviews, for example:  
<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/fellowships-and-grants/internal-fellowships-grants/career-development-grant-program-for-humanists-and-social-scientists.html>

- All students are eligible for a career total of \$3000 in funding from the department to cover attendance at conferences where they are presenting papers, interviewing for jobs, and/or representing the department in a society's graduate organization.
  - \$750 maximum for a conference at which you are delivering a paper
  - \$500 maximum for a conference at which you have only job interviews (maximum of one)
  - \$1500 maximum total grants for any academic year

Students are encouraged to seek additional conference travel funding from professional societies, clusters, and other granting organizations; these awards will not count against the funds available from TGS or Religious Studies.

***Exceptional circumstances:*** If uncommitted money remains in the TGS travel budget at the beginning of spring quarter of an academic year, TGS may allow students who have received two TGS grants to apply for a third TGS-supported grant for spring or summer. If an important conference opportunity arises that cannot be accommodated by a student's remaining conference funds, and no other support is available, the student and adviser should contact the Chair.

**Conference Travel Grant** Continue on next page

Overview:

The Conference Travel Grant (CTG) provides funds to assist PhD and MFA students attending virtual (remote) conferences or traveling\* to/attending in-person conferences on behalf of the University.

***\*All travelers must adhere to the [University's travel guidelines](#).***

Deadline:

- Students must apply prior to the first date of the virtual conference or conference travel, but no more than 3 months in advance. Under no circumstances will approval be granted if the application is submitted late. If submitting the application more than 3 months in advance is necessary, please email [gradfund@northwestern.edu](mailto:gradfund@northwestern.edu) to explain the circumstances.
- Funds for travel in the 22/23 academic year (fiscal year 2023) are available for use until August 31, 2023. Funds awarded in the current fiscal year do not carry forward (are not available for use) in the next fiscal year. Funds for travel after September 1, 2023 cannot be awarded until the next fiscal year (after September 1, 2023). Students who are attending conferences in early September 2023 must still apply in advance, with the understanding that funds awarded for travel starting on or after September 1 cannot be accessed until the next fiscal year.
- Under no circumstances will approval be given retroactively if an application is submitted after the conference has begun.

Eligibility:

- Students must be active (not discontinued, graduated, or on leave) and in good academic standing in PhD or MFA programs administered by The Graduate School (TGS) and within their degree time limitation.
- Students may utilize CTG funds only while active PhD or MFA students in The Graduate School at Northwestern. Should students graduate or otherwise depart the University prior to travel and/or expenditure of funds, funds will not be available.
- Students are eligible for a maximum of two grants each up to \$600/\$800 (depending on discipline, see below) over the entire course of their graduate career in The Graduate School.
- Students must provide a copy of the invitation to present at or confirmation of registration for the conference.

**Conference Travel Grant** Continue on next page

- The maximum amount for each Conference Travel Grant is:
  - \$600 for students in science, engineering, and math. This includes programs in McCormick; Feinberg; Weinberg programs of Chemistry, Earth and Planetary Sciences, IBiS, Mathematics, Physics, Astronomy, Statistics; and related interdisciplinary programs
  - \$800 for students in social sciences and humanities
- Awards must be expended prior to the end of the fiscal year in which they are awarded. Expense reimbursement requests not properly submitted and approved by the end of the fiscal year (August 31) cannot be processed.
- Conference Travel Grants may be used for virtual conference registration fees, or expenses directly related to traveling to/from and participating in an in-person conference. Eligible expenses include:
  - Conference registration fees.
  - Airfare/airline fees at the most reasonable and economical rate: Travel for Northwestern purposes should be booked through a [preferred provider](#).
  - Ground transportation: Taxi fares, including tips, are reimbursable where public transportation is not practical. Rail transportation is reimbursed if it does not exceed the cost of the least expensive airfare. Private automobile transportation is reimbursed per mile at a rate set by the University.
  - Meals: Travelers should use reasonably priced restaurants and dining rooms. Alcohol is never an allowable expense.
  - Commercial rental vehicles: Commercial rental (economy, compact or subcompact) vehicles should be used only when it is impossible to use other forms of ground transportation, and when car rental does not exceed the cost of the least expensive airfare.
  - Lodging: Travelers must book standard accommodations in reasonably priced, commercial class hotels and motels. Conference-site hotels will be reimbursed at the actual cost. To verify the conference site hotel rate, attach the conference literature to the Expense Report when requesting reimbursement.
  - Tolls and parking fees: Tolls and reasonable parking charges will be reimbursed
  - Travel internet connectivity: Charges for Internet connections for business use at hotels, conference sites, airports and Internet cafes while traveling are reimbursable with receipts.



### **Conference Travel Grant** Continue on next page

Ineligible CTG expenses include (but are not limited to):

- First, business class, or economy plus airfare
- Airline upgrades
- Alcohol
- Books, magazines, newspapers for personal use
- Childcare, babysitting, house sitting, pet-sitting (see the [Dependent Care Grant](#) for information on funds for dependent care during conference travel)
- Clothing, gifts, haircuts, laundry, dry cleaning
- Passports, vaccinations, visas
- Personal entertainment (in flight movies, headsets, social activities)
- Other expenses not directly related to traveling to/from and participating in the conference
- The Graduate School reviews all expense reimbursement requests and may deny requests if they do not comply with CTG use guidelines or The Graduate School's [current expense guidelines](#)

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/fellowships-and-grants/internal-fellowships-grants/conference-travel-grant.html>

## **XII. Transfer Policy**

*1. Transfers from other universities and internal transfers of students without TGS/WCAS funding:*

Students must apply through regular TGS channels like other outside applicants.

*2. Internal transfers of students with TGS/WCAS funding:*

Funded students already studying in other NU PhD programs may apply to transfer to Religious Studies at any time. We encourage only transfer students who find that changes in their foci or changes in staffing in their home departments or in Religious Studies suggest that their academic needs would be met better in Religious Studies than through collaboration between Religious Studies and their home departments.

The application process suggested below may require modification by or coordination with WCAS/TGS.

Applicants must provide the following:

- Curriculum vitae
- Statement of purpose modeled on the usual applicant statement of purpose explaining the applicant's academic background both at NU and in previous programs, reason for wanting to transfer, and planned program of research
- List of Religious Studies requirements already fulfilled, if any
- Proposed timeline for all course, language, and examination requirements as stipulated for all regular graduate students in the Religious Studies program
- Writing sample of approximately 20-25 pages

Applicants' departments must provide two letters of support (ideally from a mentor and the DGS) speaking to the student's skills as a scholar and supporting the student's rationale for the transfer

In order for consideration of the transfer to proceed, there must be:

- Written confirmation from TGS that the student's funding will transfer
- Written confirmation of support from at least one on Religious Studies faculty member who is eager and able to mentor the student

The acceptance of the proposed transfer will be decided at a departmental meeting by vote of all present faculty by simple majority, with proxy votes accepted at the discretion of the department chair. The application materials must be available for circulation to the department at least one week prior to the meeting at which the student's application for transfer is to be considered.

### **XIII. Advanced Standing**

Following TGS policy, the Department of Religious Studies does not award formal transfer credit to students who enter the program with Masters degrees in the field and no other coursework.

Students who have significant PhD level study beyond the Masters may request from the department up to three quarters of advanced standing upon acceptance to the program or at the first-quarter planning meeting. Candidacy and other deadlines will be altered according to the number of quarters awarded. For example, a student with three quarters of advanced standing is expected to complete all three required courses and the second-year paper during the first year; to achieve candidacy in the second year; and to defend the dissertation proposal at the beginning of the third year. No student may receive more than three quarters of advanced standing, because no student is exempt from the TGS requirement of 8 consecutive quarters (two academic years and two summers) of full-time registration and 9 graded courses. Advanced standing does not alter a student's funding package. In all cases, admitted students are guaranteed five years of funding.

#### **XIV. TGS Funding and Internal Grants**

All students are admitted with 20 quarters of TGS funding: five full academic years and five summers. This normally includes at least six quarters of teaching assistant work (GA-ship), usually two each in the second and third years and two divided as the student prefers between the fourth and fifth years. In other quarters, students are funded by a University Fellowship (UF).

The designation “GA” denotes funding for a Teaching, Graduate, or Research Assistantships. “UF” designates a University Fellowship. GA vs UF designation has tax implications. If you are on UF funding, the University does not withhold taxes and if you are on GA funding then the University will. The University will not withhold Federal or Illinois taxes from your fellowship stipend unless you request the Payroll Office to withhold a specific dollar amount each month. Teaching, Graduate Assistants and Research Assistants will need to complete W-4 Federal and Illinois withholding forms because the University is required to withhold taxes from your stipend checks. More information can be found at: <https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/taxes/>.

Students who win external fellowships (fellowships not funded by Northwestern) for use in years 1-5 of their PhD programs receive and the following benefits from TGS:

- During the period of the external fellowship, a monthly supplement of \$500.
- The option to “bank” up to three quarters of NU support (depending on the fellowship length) not used during the external fellowship period. These quarters of funding may be used anytime beginning in summer of the fifth year through spring of the sixth year. They may not be used after spring quarter of the sixth year.

Internal fellowships are administered and awarded by Northwestern. Examples are the Northwestern Mellon fellowships and the Presidential Fellowships. Fellowships like the Liebmann or the Fulbright, for which Northwestern nominates but which it does not administer, are external fellowships.

Currently WCAS does not support students in the seventh year or beyond. For more information on use of GA-ship and fellowship years, see “Teaching”.

#### **Graduate Research Grant**

The Graduate Research Grant (GRG) is intended to help PhD and MFA students in historically underfunded disciplines meet expenses related to scholarly research and creative endeavors. The maximum award amount for a student over the course of his or her graduate career at Northwestern is \$3,000.

- Awards are for a twelve-month period and require that a final report is submitted at the end of the award period.
- The deadline is the third week of each Fall, Winter, or Spring quarters.

- Awards are announced within 2 months of each deadline.

For more information, see: <https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/fellowships-and-grants/internal-fellowships-grants/graduate-research-grant.html>

*Successful GRG applications require care.*

- GRGs are subject to rigorous review. Grantors evaluate the authors' "grantsmanship." Does the overall project have a gripping purpose? Is the purpose for which the grant is sought essential to the larger project? Has the student demonstrated adequate preparation? In general, is the proposal of similar quality to a major grant application?
- About the half of proposals are turned back during each application round. Thus, be sure to apply a cycle or two before you need the money; you may need to try two or three times.
- Students whose proposals are turned back are usually sent to the Writing Place. Therefore, it's a good idea to begin by getting help there or from Fellowships. A "cold reading" is also useful: call on friends and/or professors in other subfields.

### **Career Development Grant Program for the Humanities and Social Scientists**

The Career Development Grant Program for Humanists and Social Scientists is intended to facilitate students' next professional steps after graduate school be they on the conventional academic path or not. The awards can be used to cover costs directly related to a job search, such as travel to conferences or other venues to interview or for items such as production costs for job market materials.

Students can be granted up to \$400 over the course of their graduate career (either in one \$400 award or multiple awards not exceeding \$400).

Contact: [gradfund@northwestern.edu](mailto:gradfund@northwestern.edu)

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/fellowships-and-grants/internal-fellowships-grants/career-development-grant-program-for-humanists-and-social-scientists.html>

### **XV. Graduate Student Additional Work Policy**

According to Weinberg College policy, graduate students funded through the Graduate School or the College (whether by fellowship or graduate assistantship) must refrain from other remunerative work, unless an online permission to work (PTW) request is approved by both WCAS and TGS. Any such request must provide the number of hours to be work, the amount of compensation, the overall time-period, and the nature of the work. The PTW must be approved online by the student's adviser, DGS and the Departmental Chair. In general, requests will be approved only for additional remunerative work that amounts to 15 hours or less per week and that the student's adviser will certify as having no adverse effect on timely completion of the student's degree. Approved tasks often include assisting with

conferences, performing light research assistant work, or serving as an assistant master in a residential college.

First-year students are normally not eligible for significant, sustained additional work but can usually receive permission for occasional work such as assisting with a conference, lecture, or reception.

For more information:

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/financial-aid-policies.html#permission>

## **XVI. Registration**

### *1. Registration Guide*

Special cases like independent studies, exam preparation, research, and teaching assistantship require particular registration numbers. The list below provides some guidance; consult the GPA with questions.

**REL 490-** TA / RA Assistantship: Students register for REL 490 as a placeholder for TA / RA work. Graded P/N. You will need a permission number to register for REL 490. Obtain permission number from GPA and register with professor teaching the course.

**REL 499-** Independent Study: Students register for 499 with the professor with whom student is taking independent study. A first-year graduate student may take no more than one-half of the total credits in any one quarter in 499 Independent Study or 499 Projects. Please obtain permission number from GPA. Graded ABC/NC.

**REL 570-** Research Seminar: Second-year students register for two of the three quarters between fall and spring for the second-year paper. Please obtain a permission number from the GPA and register under the adviser's name. A single grade will be given to both quarters after completion of paper.

**REL 590-** Research: Students who have not yet completed residency requirements use REL 590 as a placeholder for research outside their coursework. This generally is used for students in year one and two of the program. Can be taken for 1, 2 or 3 units. P/N.

**TGS 500-** Advanced Doctoral Study: Available only for advanced students who have completed the residency requirement of eight consecutive quarters. TGS 500 provides full-time status (all 3 units) without accumulation of credit or residency. TGS 500 does not require a permission number.

**TGS 512-** Continuous Registration: Available for students who have used all TGS funding but are continuing unfunded or are on leave. TGS 512 costs \$100/quarter and provides full time status. TGS 512 does not require a permission number but *does* require permission from the department and adviser.

**TGS 513-** Advanced Continuous Registration: - Available for students past the 9-year cut off. TGS 513 is considered less than full-time. TGS 513 will not defer student loans or keep visas active. The cost of registering for TGS 513 is \$1,000 a quarter.

#### Common summer scenarios:

- All first-year students have guaranteed funding for their first summer and must register under REL 590, or full-time with a language program or CIC course.
- All summers after the student's second year may be registered for IF the student wishes to receive funding. Second year students also register for REL 590 to meet the 8-quarter residency requirement.
- Any advanced student who wishes to use their funding for summer registers for TGS 500.
- Students in the third year and up who have summer funding and want to bank a quarter of their University Fellowship for later use do not register for summer quarter.
- If you'd like to forego summer funding but have the all NU benefits (except U-pass) during the summer, including access to university facilities such as libraries, labs, and sports facilities, you must register for TGS 512 (Continuous Registration) with a tuition of \$100/quarter.

#### **Registration**

Only students who have been officially admitted and matriculated into a degree program approved by The Graduate School may register for courses to earn credits toward a Graduate School degree. Students may not simultaneously pursue any other degree programs at Northwestern or elsewhere unless part of an approved dual degree or approved ad hoc combined degree.

The [Office of the Registrar](#) maintains a complete, up-to-date online class schedule, which can be found by selecting the "View the Quarterly Class Schedule" link on [CAESAR](#).

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#registering>

#### Summer registration:

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/general-registration-policies.html#summer>

## **Ph.D. Residency Requirements**

Residency is calculated in terms of quarters of [full-time study](#).

A student pursuing a doctoral degree must complete eight quarters of residency consecutively over two years, including summers (see the [PhD Timeline Completion](#)). [Leave of absence](#) may alter the residency timeline.

### **Residency and Transfer Credit**

No residency credit will be awarded by The Graduate School (TGS) for work completed in a graduate program outside of TGS. Individual programs may waive course requirements based on work completed at another institution (either prior to or after enrollment at Northwestern), but all students must complete nine graded courses in TGS and maintain a B average (3.0 GPA). Students may register for 590 Research within their programs to maintain [full-time registration](#) during quarters in which they are not enrolled full time in graded coursework.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/phd-degree-requirements.html>

### **Full-Time Study**

Full-time study is defined as *no fewer than three and no more than four course units* authorized for graduate credit per quarter. Most courses carry one unit of credit. Registration for more than four (4) units requires permission from the Associate Dean of Student Services at The Graduate School. The minimum registration is one (1) course.

Students must successfully complete all the course units for which they are registered in order to receive full credit toward residency. Students who fail a course will have the total credit toward residency for that quarter reduced by one third. See the [Grades and Grade Requirements](#) for further information.

Students must register full-time if they have:

- graduate assistantships
- research assistantships
- fellowships
- scholarship awards
- F-1 or J-1 visas

After completing course requirements, eligible students may maintain full-time status at reduced tuition by registering, as appropriate, for:

- TGS 588 Resident Master's Study
- TGS 500 Advanced Doctoral Study
- TGS 512 Continuous Registration

These TGS General Registration do not count toward the accumulation of quarters of residency required for a degree

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#fulltime>



### **Part-Time Study**

**PhD students** typically register full time for every quarter. In rare and exceptional circumstances, and with approval of the program and Dean of The Graduate School, PhD students may be able to register part time.

- PhD students who, in exceptional cases, have received written approval of the program and Dean of The Graduate School to study on a part time basis must meet the continuous registration requirement as well as all degree requirements, including coursework and milestones.
- Master's students who have the program's approval to study on a part-time basis may meet the minimum coursework requirement by registering in one or two course units per quarter.
- **Master's students** To be eligible for a master's degree, a student must successfully complete at least nine quality letter-graded courses (ABC, not P/NP or S/U) [authorized for graduate credit](http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#parttime).

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#parttime>

Note that TGS never admits PhD students to part-time course work. Part-time work is a rare accommodation to a student's changed circumstances.

## **Graduate Courses** Continue on next page

All students register online through [CAESAR](#) by the published registration deadlines. Registration deadlines are listed on the University [Academic Calendar](#). For courses requiring program consent, students should contact the department offering the course to obtain permission numbers.

### **Authorized Courses**

Only courses listed in [CAESAR](#) with a career of "The Graduate School" are authorized for graduate credit and only those courses can be used to meet the minimum coursework requirement of nine quality letter-graded, graduate level courses (i.e., ABC grading, not P/NP or S/U). Courses are arranged in levels designated by number:

- 300-level courses are primarily for advanced undergraduate students; some 300 level courses are approved for graduate credit.
- 400-level courses or seminars are primarily for graduate students, but the major part of the work is not research.
- 500-level courses are graduate courses in which the work is primarily research done by an individual student under faculty direction.

The number following the three-digit course number indicates whether the course is part of a sequence:

- 0 = one-quarter course
- 1,2 = two-quarter sequence
- 1,2,3 = three-quarter sequence

The number of units for which a student is registered determines if a student is in full-time status. Most courses carry one unit. Students are considered to be full-time if they are registered for three to four units of credit.

Some registrations (499 Independent Study or Projects, and 590 Research courses, for example) allow the student to register for anywhere from one to four units for the course. By registering for such courses for a total of three to four units, it is possible for a student to take only one or two courses and still be considered full-time.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#continuous>

### **TGS Research and Continuation Courses** Continued from previous page

General courses of The Graduate School are designated with a subject code, "TGS." These TGS General Registrations are not graded and do not carry academic credit.

#### **TGS 500-0 Advanced Doctoral Study**

Available to doctoral students who are primarily doing research and are receiving funding. Provides full-time status. Students may register for TGS 500-0 Advanced Doctoral Study via CAESAR when they have completed coursework requirements or during summer quarters.

#### **TGS 512-0 Continuous Registration**

Available to students who have completed the program coursework and are continuing in their degree program (writing a thesis or dissertation and/or performing research required for the degree), but **not** receiving funding. TGS 512-0 Continuous Registration is a full time registration intended for students who are continuing to work in a full-time capacity toward degree completion. TGS 512-0 Continuous Registration is \$100/quarter and allows for:

- Continuation of the student's Net ID and email account
- Access to University facilities such as libraries, labs, and sports facilities
- Maintenance of one's visa status
- The ability to defer student loans
- The ability to take additional cost-of-living loans (federal and alternative) as determined by their financial state; and
- Ability to enroll in NU-SHIP (Northwestern University Student Health Insurance) and be charged the annual premium

#### **Note that students enrolled in TGS 512-0 Continuous Registration:**

- are not eligible for TGS Activity Fee or its attendant services, including legal services and U-Pass
- are not eligible for the health insurance subsidy
- may not register for any additional units of study
- must be making progress toward degree completion

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#grades>

**Continuous Registration Policy** Continue on next page

### **TGS 588-0 Resident Master's Study**

Available to master's degree students who are receiving funding administered by the University. Provides full-time status but does not carry any units of credit. This registration requires The Graduate School's permission. To request TGS 588-0 Resident Masters Study enrollment. Students should first consult with the program Director of Graduate Studies or adviser, then email [gradservices@northwestern.edu](mailto:gradservices@northwestern.edu).

### **Non-TGS Courses**

Students may take courses outside of The Graduate School career. Courses not authorized for TGS credit do not count toward The Graduate School's minimum coursework requirement.

- Students taking non-TGS graduate classes in the School of Education and Social Policy, McCormick School of Engineering, Bienen School of Music, School of Communication, or taking undergraduate classes may register using CAESAR by obtaining a permission number from the program offering the class.
- Registration for classes in [other schools](#), including Kellogg School of Management, School of Professional Studies, and the Law School are handled through the respective schools' registrars. To request enrollments in other schools, students should contact [Student Services](#).

### **Auditing**

Students in The Graduate School do not have the option to register for courses as auditors.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#CRP>

## **Readmission**

Degree-seeking students who miss one or more quarters of registration (excluding summer), who fail to request return after an approved period of leave of absence, or who request to withdraw from their program will be discontinued from The Graduate School. Those who are discontinued are not enrolled and are not considered active students. Students who fall into this category and who wish to return to the University must submit an [online application](#) no less than two weeks before the start of the winter, spring and summer quarters and no less than four weeks before the start of the fall quarter and be sure to accurately respond to the first page of questions on the application.

Those who have previously been enrolled in The Graduate School at Northwestern University as degree-seeking students but have had a break in their enrollment resulting from withdrawal or failure to continuously register will be subject to a readmission fee of \$250 plus \$100 for each fall, winter, and spring missed quarter of enrollment up to a cap of \$1000.

Students who are awarded a degree from The Graduate School and apply for readmission to pursue another degree in The Graduate School are not assessed a readmission fee.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/readmission.html>

## **Withdrawal**

Students who wish to withdraw entirely from The Graduate School must complete the Program Withdrawal Request form via TGS Forms in [GSTS](#). Per The Graduate School and the University's withdrawal and refund policies, whether a tuition refund is possible and the amount of the refund depends on how long students were enrolled in the term. All tuition adjustments are computed as of the date on which the official withdrawal notice is received. Refunds of part or all of the tuition depend on the time the request is made, per the [published refund schedule](#).

Withdrawals in the fall, winter, and spring quarters with an "Effective Date" through the end of the sixth week of classes will result in an entry on the transcript documenting the withdrawal date. Withdrawals with an "Effective Date" after the end of the sixth week will result in the withdrawn courses, with grades of "W", being posted on the transcript along with the withdrawal date.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/withdrawal.html>

## XVII. Grading

Below and in regulations on satisfactory academic progress, TGS outlines the minimum GPA required for maintaining good standing in TGS, retaining University funding, and earning a degree. However, successful students in Religious Studies typically earn GPAs of 3.8 or above.

### Grading Systems

Students in The Graduate School must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.

Grades given for completed, credit-bearing graduate courses not taken on a pass/no credit (P/N) basis are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, and F (for failing work,0).

### Incomplete Grades

- **Y Grades:** Failed to earn credit: work incomplete
- **X Grades:** Failed to earn credit: missed final examination
- **PY Grades:** Permanent Incomplete. Requires a Change of Grade Form from Instructor and a signed General Petition Form. A permanent incomplete has no impact on the GPA and may not be changed once assigned.
- A grade of Y may be given when a student does not submit all assigned work in a course; a grade of X may be given when a student fails to take the final examination. It is up to the course instructor to determine whether an incomplete (X or Y) grade is appropriate. Typically, a grade of Y, X or PY is reserved for students who experience extraordinary, catastrophic events beyond their control and is assigned only in extreme and unusual cases.
- Students should make up incomplete work within one calendar year for a class in which an X or Y grade has been assigned. Course instructors and/or individual academic programs may impose stricter timelines for completing work. Outstanding incomplete (X or Y) grades may lead to probation and/or may prevent graduation.
- Note that X, Y, NR, PY and F grades do not count toward the minimum coursework required for a degree.
- Students may not graduate with X, Y, K, or NR (Not Reported) grades on the transcript.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#grades>

### P/N Courses

During their first two years at Northwestern University, Religious Studies Ph.D. students may take up to 2 courses Pass/No Credit (P/N) in addition to 490 registrations for teaching assistantships / RA, also P/N.

No more than one course may be taken P/N in either Religious Studies or the secondary department. P/N courses may not include the following:

- Religion 481-1,2
- Religion 482
- Religion 570-1, 2, 3 (unless the student takes 570-2 as a P/N overload during winter)
- Required introductory classroom and research courses in the secondary department (typically, the introductory course or two-course sequence in that department)

During their third year, students may take courses in any third department P/N. In addition, they may take P/N courses in Religious Studies if their Religious Studies requirements have been fulfilled, and they may take P/N courses in their second departments if their second department requirements have been fulfilled.

However, all pre-candidacy students are strongly advised to take courses essential to their fields and concentrations for ABC/NC grades, even if Religious Studies and secondary departmental requirements have been fulfilled. After candidacy students may take any courses P/N.

In Religious Studies, students taking P/N courses are required to complete all requirements, including any final project.

#### **GA (TA) work**

During course work: 490 (which is P/N) is used as the place-holder for teaching assistant (GA) work (this includes the period in which students are registering for 490, 499 or 590 for exams and exam prep)

#### **Pass/No Credit Option**

Students will follow individual program requirements regarding graded coursework. Courses may be taken Pass/No Pass (P/N) only when this grading basis is available for selection in CAESAR. No individual exceptions will be allowed.

- 590 research registrations must be taken on a P/N basis. A grade of K (in progress), not a Y (incomplete), is given when the work for 590 is in progress.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/general-registration-policies.html#grades>

## XVIII. Graduate School Forms:

### TGS Forms for Graduate Students

The GSTS (Graduate Student Tracking System) allows programs to keep track of graduate student academic progress and view academic milestones and related academic activity in one place. GSTS allows programs and students to view student records information directly from CAESAR, as well as additional information that students and programs input. GSTS helps programs and students view information and keep track of progress related to:

- Advisor and committee
- Plan of study, including coursework planned and completed
- Annual progress, including awards, publications, research progress, meetings attended, teaching, and research goals
- Milestones (TGS and program-specific)
- TGS Forms (application for degree, master's degree completion, PhD qualifying exam, PhD prospectus, PhD final exam, petition for absence, and program withdrawal form)

Once you submit a form on GSTS, the information will be sent to your program for approval. Your program may have additional submission requirements so please be sure to communicate with program staff before submitting. Once your program approves, TGS will be notified and, barring any problems or holds, will also approve. You will receive emails notifying you of form submission and final approval.

Other TGS forms:

- [Application for Readmission form](#)
- [Program Transfer Form](#)
- Change in Degree Sought- The student must submit an [online application](#) and be sure to accurately respond to the first page of questions. Programs may require supporting documents to consider the request.

To enroll in or waive student health insurance please visit the [Health Services website](#).

For fellowship, scholarship, and financial aid forms, see the [Financial Aid webpage](#).

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/index.html>



## **XIX. Satisfactory Academic Progress**

### **Summary of adequate progress**

- Completion of graduate-level courses as outlined in the yearly plan, including required courses, within the first two years and with a GPA of at least 3.0 (note that a GPA of 3.8 or more is preferred)
- Timely completion of language requirements set with advisers
- Satisfaction of any conditions set at the first-year review
- Timely completion of a second-year paper of publishable quality
- Approval at second year review, if needed
- Successful completion of qualifying exams and language exams specified by departmental requirements, by the end of the summer before the fourth year
- Satisfaction of all TGS requirements, including the deadline for the approval of the prospectus, eight consecutive quarters of residency, and timely completion of incompletes
- Successful performance as a teaching assistant

Please note that time to completion of any of these requirements may be extended if a leave of absence has been granted; conversely, time to completion may be abbreviated if credit is awarded for Ph.D. level study in another program.

Continued on next page

Cases of improper academic and/or research conduct, and inappropriate or unprofessional behavior are considered outside the boundaries of "satisfactory academic progress." Resources for these cases can be found here: [TGS Academic Integrity policy](#), [Office for Research Integrity](#), [Office of Equal Opportunity and Access](#), [Student Handbook](#)

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

The Graduate School sets the minimum standard for satisfactory academic progress. Programs may impose additional criteria beyond The Graduate School's for determining a student's academic standing. There are three sets of criteria that The Graduate School takes into account in determining whether or not students are making satisfactory academic progress:

- **Grades and cumulative GPA:** A student whose overall (cumulative) grade average is below B (3.0 GPA) or who has more than three incomplete (Y or X) grades is not making satisfactory academic progress and will be placed on probation by The Graduate School. Individual programs may have stricter criteria and can determine independently from The Graduate School that a student is not meeting grade and/or cumulative GPA requirements in the program.
- **Milestone deadlines:** Doctoral students who have not been admitted to candidacy (have not passed the qualifying exam) by the end of their third year, or who have not completed the dissertation proposal (prospectus) by the end of the fourth year are not making satisfactory academic progress and will be placed on academic probation by The Graduate School. Individual programs may have earlier deadlines or additional milestones and can determine independently from The Graduate School that a student is not making satisfactory progress toward milestones.
- **Program length:** Doctoral students must complete all requirements for the PhD within [nine years of initial registration](#) in The Graduate School. Master's students must complete all requirements for the master's degree within [five years of initial registration](#) in The Graduate School. Students who do not complete degree requirements by the established deadlines will be placed on academic probation by The Graduate School. Individual programs may have stricter criteria for timely degree completion and can determine independently from The Graduate School that a student is not making satisfactory progress toward degree completion.

Programs may have criteria beyond The Graduate School's criteria for determining a student's academic standing.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress.html>

Each student's academic progress must be reported annually by the student's program to the student and to TGS. Failure to make satisfactory academic progress as determined by either The Graduate School or the program will result in probation or exclusion (dismissal).

### **PROBATION**

When a student fails to meet any of the three sets of criteria established by The Graduate School for maintaining satisfactory academic progress, the student will be placed on probation by The Graduate School.

The Graduate School will notify the student in writing, along with the program's Director of Graduate Studies, and will be given at most two quarters (not including summer quarter) to resume satisfactory academic standing. The Graduate School notifies students of probation status on a quarterly basis (excluding summer).

During The Graduate School-imposed probationary period, students will remain eligible to receive federal and institutional assistance (except when they have exceeded their degree deadline). At the end of the probationary period, progress will be reviewed by The Graduate School. If a student does not re-establish satisfactory academic standing during the two probationary quarters and does not successfully petition for an [extension of the probationary period](#), the student will become ineligible to receive financial aid and will be excluded (dismissed) from The Graduate School.

Extensions of the probationary period will be granted only in exceptional circumstances when there are extraordinary reasons beyond the student's control that have been discussed in advance of the probation deadline between the student and their program (faculty adviser and Director of Graduate Studies).

The [petition](#) to [gradservices@northwestern.edu](mailto:gradservices@northwestern.edu) **seven (7) calendar days before the grading deadline of the last quarter of probation**, but no earlier than the first day of the last quarter of probation. Incomplete and/or late petitions will not be accepted.

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress.html>

### **EXCLUSION (DISMISSAL)**

A student who fails to resume satisfactory academic standing during the probationary period after being notified of placement on probation by The Graduate School will be excluded (dismissed) from The Graduate School. The exclusion decision is final when The Graduate School excludes a student who does not meet one or more of The Graduate School's three sets of criteria for satisfactory academic progress and who has failed to remediate within The Graduate School's probationary period.

A student can be excluded (dismissed) by a program when:

- the criteria for exclusion (dismissal) have been stated clearly by the program, either in a handbook or via direct written communication to a student, and have been disseminated to the students effectively, and
- the decision to exclude is made by the program faculty or a subset of faculty which includes the Director of Graduate Study. No individual faculty member may exclude a student.

Funding will cease on the effective date of the exclusion unless other arrangements are made. When a student is excluded (dismissed) by the program, the student has an opportunity to [appeal the exclusion decision](#) to The Graduate School. When a student appeals the program's exclusion decision, the student remains an active student while the appeal is under review. In the event the appeal is denied, the exclusion takes effect after the appeal process has concluded.

### **NOTIFICATION OF EXCLUSION (DISMISSAL)**

When The Graduate School determines that a student is to be excluded, both the program and the student will be informed in writing (email communication is considered to be "in writing") within ten business days of the determination.

Similarly, when a decision to exclude a student is made by the program, both the student and The Graduate School must be informed in writing within ten business days of the decision. The exclusion (dismissal) notification must include the effective date of the exclusion and a clear statement of the reason(s) for exclusion.

## APPEAL PROCESS

Students wishing to appeal a program's exclusion decision may appeal the final program exclusion decision to The Graduate School. To appeal a program decision, students should submit a request in writing to the attention of [Student Services](#) within ten calendar days of the date of the program's final written determination of exclusion to the student and include any supporting materials at that time. If no appeal is filed within the ten-day appeal period, the program's decision becomes final and not subject to appeal.

Grounds for appeal of a program's exclusion decision are as follows:

- procedural errors in the exclusion process
- new information discovered after the exclusion that was not available at the time of the exclusion and could impact the outcome
- program's decision to exclude was manifestly contrary to the weight of the information available at the time of the decision (i.e., exclusion is obviously unreasonable and unsupported by the great weight of information).

Appeals of program exclusions are reviewed by the Dean of The Graduate School (and/or the Dean's designate) who may request additional information from, or a meeting with, the student and/or program before making a final decision. If the Dean (or the Dean's designate) does not find that any of the aforementioned grounds for appeal are present, the Dean will uphold the outcome of the program. If the Dean (or the Dean's designate) finds that grounds for appeal are valid, they may amend the decision of the program. The Dean's decision will be made within 30 days of the submission of the appeal and will be communicated in writing to both the student and the program. When resolution cannot be achieved within 30 days, students and programs will be informed in writing of the delay and the final disposition will be achieved as quickly as possible. The Dean's decision is final.

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress.html>

## XX. Leave of Absence

In our department, we understand that one's academic progress may be interrupted by important commitments to family; by mental or physical illness; or by other pressing emergencies. We do not attach a stigma to such leaves. We urge you to contact your advisor and the DGS to discuss the issue as soon as practical. In Religious Studies, before requesting an official leave from TGS, the student should gain the written approval of the adviser and the DGS. The approval should include the student's reason for a leave; explicit plans for the leave; and a date and conditions for return to the program. Under no circumstances should a student request an academic leave from TGS without having had a serious conversation with his or her advisor. We can first offer the support of the Department and assist in supporting your petition for a leave to TGS. Students do not need the permission of the department for family leave or childbirth accommodation, but they should inform their advisers, the GPA, and the DGS and make plans for completing or postponing work.

### Leave of Absence

Leaves of absence are defined as a temporary separation from the University for a minimum of one quarter and a maximum of one year. Students who need to interrupt their progress towards degree may petition for a leave of absence. There are three types of leaves:

- [Medical Leave of Absence](#): For students who must temporarily interrupt progress toward degree due to a physical or mental health condition.
- [Family Leave of Absence](#): For students who must temporarily interrupt progress toward degree to extend absence post-childbirth, care for a newborn, adopt a child, or care for a family member. This leave of absence is separate from the [parental accommodation policy](#) and may be taken in addition to a parental accommodation. The parental accommodation is not considered a leave of absence. Please see the [parental accommodation policy](#).
- [General Leave of Absence](#): For students who elect to temporarily interrupt their progress toward degree for a non-medical/non-family care reason

All leaves of absence must be approved by the appropriate University offices/programs. The procedure for requesting a leave and the specific approvals required depend on the type of leave.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/leaves-of-absence.html>

### **Medical Leave of Absence**

A student who must temporarily interrupt their progress toward degree due to a physical or mental health need must petition for a medical leave of absence. Medical leaves of absence are initiated through the [Dean of Students Office](#). The process for a student to request a medical leave of absence is outlined on the [Dean of Students, Medical Leave of Absence website](#).

### **Family Leave of Absence**

A student who must temporarily interrupt progress toward degree to care for a child or other family member, or to extend absence following a parental accommodation may petition for a family leave of absence. Family leaves of absence must be approved by the student's program of study and The Graduate School. International students on a visa must first consult with the [Office of International Student and Scholar Services](#). The process to petition for a family leave of absence is as follows:

- Student must submit the “Petition for Absence” form via TGS Forms in [GSTS](#). The program's Director of Graduate Studies (DGS ) or DGS designate will review the form, after which The Graduate School will review.
- The Graduate School will notify the student (and the program) of the approval status.
- The student must petition for reinstatement by contacting [TGS student services](#) via email at least 6 weeks before the start of the quarter in which they plan to return.

### **General Leave of Absence**

A student who wishes to temporarily interrupt their progress toward degree for a non-medical/non-family care reason may petition for a general leave of absence. General leaves of absence must be approved by the student's program of study and The Graduate School. International students on a visa must also have their leave approved by the [Office of International Student and Scholar Services](#). The process to petition for a general leave of absence is as follows:

- Student must submit the “Petition for Absence” form via TGS Forms in [GSTS](#). The program's Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or DGS designate will review the form, after which The Graduate School will review.
- The Graduate School will notify the student (and the program) of the approval status.
- The student must petition for reinstatement by contacting [TGS student services](#) via email at least 6 weeks before the start of the quarter in which they plan to return.

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academic-policies-procedures/policies/leaves-of-absence.html> - [general](#)

## **Parental Accommodation**

A student who experiences the birth or adoption of a child for whom they have parental responsibilities may petition for a Parental Accommodation. Additional information and the process for requesting a parental accommodation is outlined in the [Parental Accommodation section](#).

This policy is separate from any student absences that are medically necessary due to pregnancy or childbirth – such absences are accommodated through the [medical leave of absence process](#).

### **Eligibility**

The Graduate Student Parental Accommodation applies to active students of all gender identities and gender expressions in The Graduate School who experience the birth or adoption of a child for whom they have parental responsibilities.

- Those adopting children over the age of 18 or a spouse's or partner's child are not covered by this policy.
- Those residing in localities where legal adoption is not an option but who are assuming parental responsibilities and otherwise meet the eligibility criteria are covered by this policy.

Students are eligible who have not utilized a parental accommodation during the previous 12 months before the requested accommodation start date.

<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/parental-accommodation/>



## Accommodation Options

Accommodation options vary with the student's funding status and funding source:

- Funded graduate students (graduate assistants, research assistants, teaching assistants, trainees, fellows) who would receive tuition and stipend from the University as of the start of the accommodation period, as well as graduate students who are funded from an external source, may request paid leave from their duties for a 12 week accommodation period.
- Funding will be provided by The Graduate School for the 12 week accommodation period. Funding will be applied in the months closest to the dates of the accommodation.
- If a student is not receiving funding as of the start date of the parental accommodation, none will be provided by this accommodation.
- Graduate students who are funded from an external source supported on external fellowships or awards are obliged to inform their funding agency and should consult [TGS Student Funding](#).
- Unfunded graduate students (those who are not receiving funding as of the start date of the parental accommodation) may request unpaid leave from their studies for up to a 12 week accommodation period.

Either option will result in the extension of future TGS milestone deadlines (qualifying exam, prospectus, and degree deadline) by one year (four quarters). Programs must extend future, program-specific deadlines by the same length. Students, Directors of Graduate Studies (DGSes) and advisers are expected to discuss a timeline for meeting requirements well in advance of the start of the accommodation period.

Eligible students will request a Parental Accommodation by submitting the "Petition for Absence" form via TGS Forms in [GSTS](#) and selecting the parental accommodation option at least 60 days prior to the accommodation start date (or as soon as possible in unforeseen circumstances).

At the end of the 12 week period, students will resume their studies. If additional time away is needed, students must file for the appropriate leave of absence.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/childbirth-accomodation.html>

## **XXI. Nondiscrimination Statement:**

Northwestern University does not discriminate or permit discrimination by any member of its community against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, genetic information, reproductive health decision making, or any other classification protected by law in matters of admissions, employment, housing, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates. Harassment, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based on any of these characteristics is a form of discrimination. Further prohibited by law is discrimination against any employee and/or job applicant who chooses to inquire about, discuss, or disclose their own compensation or the compensation of another employee or applicant.

Northwestern University complies with federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination based on the protected categories listed above, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX requires educational institutions, such as Northwestern, to prohibit discrimination based on sex (including sexual harassment) in the University's educational programs and activities, including in matters of employment and admissions. In addition, Northwestern provides reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants, students, and employees with disabilities and to individuals who are pregnant.

Any alleged violations of this policy or questions with respect to nondiscrimination or reasonable accommodations should be directed to Northwestern's Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, [equity@northwestern.edu](mailto:equity@northwestern.edu).

Questions specific to sex discrimination (including sexual misconduct and sexual harassment) should be directed to Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, [TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu](mailto:TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu).

A person may also file a complaint with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights regarding an alleged violation of Title IX by calling 800-421-3481 or visiting: [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html) or. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to Northwestern may be referred to Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator, the United States Department of Education's Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, or both.

## **XXII. Getting Help**

The University is a big, sprawling place, and when you have a question or need help it is not always clear where to turn. Here are a few of the more common issues that you may encounter, and where to get help for them:

## **Academic Advice**

Questions about schedule, exams, and general course of study should be directed toward students' faculty advisers and the core faculty in their programs. Students pursuing a second major model should also consult their second department mentors. The DGS is available for general consultation. Graduate school advisers solve registration problems.

## **Career Advice/Placement**

Students should be in close consultation with the dissertation advisor about placement issues. They will need to contact Career Services to compile a dossier and should be a member of the American Academy of Religion and possibly other relevant societies, such as the Society for Biblical Literature, North American Patristic Society, or Society of Christian Ethics. At any time students may direct questions to the DGS, who can help and advise them through this somewhat stressful process.

Your mentors will help you revise your CV, cover letter, teaching statement, and other supporting materials for job applications. For help with producing first drafts of all these items, as well as for information on setting up a credentials file, please see:

<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/services-support/professional-development/index.html>

This page is full of helpful links and basic information for academic job searches.

<https://www.northwestern.edu/careers/programs-opportunities/development-fund/index.html>

For a general overview of services available through UCS, including links to advice on applying for non-academic jobs, please see <https://www.northwestern.edu/careers/>

Students who wish to send cover letters on departmental letterhead stationery may obtain it from the GPA, or send the files electronically to the GPA 24 hours before they are needed.

## **Computing:**

All computing questions should be directed to NUIT Support Center:

<http://www.it.northwestern.edu/supportcenter/>

NUIT's central helpdesk provides phone consulting on NUIT-supported software and services, wireless troubleshooting, and computer/network threat assistance for faculty, staff, and students of the University. The NUIT Support Center also accepts requests for new e-mail accounts and helps users manage their NetID passwords. For e-mail assistance, e-mail message can be sent to [email-accounts@northwestern.edu](mailto:email-accounts@northwestern.edu), or fax request to 847-467-5988.

Central helpdesk: 847-491-HELP(4357) or [consultant@northwestern.edu](mailto:consultant@northwestern.edu).

**Dissertation Committee:**

You should first consult your adviser and then the DGS to ensure that the committee's composition fits TGS guidelines. Although the Committee first takes shape in the dissertation proposal defense, it is not formally constituted until the defense of the dissertation.

**Fellowship Opportunities:**

TGS, Senior Director Student Services: Kate Veraldi ([k-veraldi@northwestern.edu](mailto:k-veraldi@northwestern.edu)) for internal fellowships.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/financial-aid/fello-schola-grants/index.html>

For more opportunities, please check:

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/about-graduate-funding.html>

Office of Fellowships: Stephen Hill ([s-hill@northwestern.edu](mailto:s-hill@northwestern.edu)), foreign fellowships and Elizabeth Pardoe ([e-pardoe@northwestern.edu](mailto:e-pardoe@northwestern.edu)), domestic fellowships.

**Grievances:**

If there is a conflict with a faculty member, the issue should be taken up directly with that faculty member. If the matter is not resolved, consultation can be made with the DGS, followed (if a resolution has not been made) by the Chair.

**Payroll inquiries:**

<https://www.northwestern.edu/hr/about/our-staff/hr-operations/>

Consult the DA for questions about payroll and stipends.

**Petitions:**

TGS petitions can be found on CAESAR. If you cannot locate the necessary form, file the General Petition. Consult the GPA or the Registrar for further help.

**Reimbursements:**

Reimbursements for expenses related to funded travel and to departmental business must be approved in advance. Upload receipts with any meeting invitation, schedule or RSVP list, (and copies of credit card statement if applicable) to a Departmental Expense Report.

**Requirements:**

Questions about academic requirements, including fulfillment of language requirements, should be directed to the adviser and the DGS.

**Status:**

Questions regarding your status (e.g., funded research leaves, leaves of absence) should be directed to the DGS. Questions regarding your use of TA and fellowship quarters should be directed to the GPA.

**TA Assignments:**

The DGS makes the TA assignments in consultation with the GPA, faculty, and students. Should you have any questions (or preferences), consult the DGS. We try very hard to accommodate preferences, but sometimes the course schedule and our desire to ensure low undergraduate student loads prevent us from doing so. Once assignments are made, it is frequently possible for students to initiate trades of assignments with other students. If a trade is welcome to all students and professors involved, please inform the GPA, DGS, and DA of the change.

**Teaching Advice:**

Your work as a TA should be a collaboration between you and the supervising faculty member. You should feel free to consult your supervisor for discussions of your teaching. The Searle Center for Teaching Excellence is an excellent resource for teaching advice. It runs a variety of valuable seminars and certification programs for graduate students.

<http://www.northwestern.edu/searle/>

Searle no longer provides video recording of teaching: the equipment and logistics are difficult to maintain. Students may check out recording equipment from the library:

<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/>

The Searle Center continues to provide consultations and the students can to meet with an instructor to go over any teaching videos. Searle Center also conduct observations and Small Group Analyses for instructor:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/searle/resources/index.html>

**Teaching Evaluation:**

CTEC Reports through CAESAR: <https://caesar.northwestern.edu>

**Teaching Logistics:**

Issues dealing with the logistics of teaching (e.g., room assignments, copying, copyright permissions) should be directed toward the GPA or DA.

**Travel:** See Conference Funding

**XXIII. The Graduate School Frequently Asked Questions** continue on next page

REGISTRATION

Q: I need to enroll in TGS 512, Continuous Registration. Am I eligible for health insurance?

A: Yes, you are eligible for health insurance, but NOT for the health insurance subsidy.

Q: I need to enroll in TGS 512, Continuous Registration. Am I eligible for the U Pass?

A: Students enrolled in TGS 512 do not pay the student activity fee and are not eligible for the U Pass.

Q: Which courses are authorized for graduate credit?

A: Only courses listed in CAESAR with a career of “The Graduate School” (TGS) are authorized for graduate credit.

Q: In which courses should I enroll?

A: Please consult with your program if you have questions about coursework or specific degree requirements. For general registration and deadline questions, PhD students can consult the [PhD Timeline](#) and Masters students can consult the [Master's Residency and Courses](#) page.

Q: When can I register?

A: Check the Office of the Registrar [academic calendar](#) for dates of registration as well as other important academic dates.

Q: I've missed the registration deadline and can no longer register on CAESAR. How do I register?

A: Students must register before or during the add/drop period of each quarter. Not registering on time will result in discontinuation. If you have been discontinued due to non-enrollment, please see the [Readmission](#).

#### **RESIDENCY and FULL-TIME REGISTRATION**

Q: When am I considered to be in full-time status?

A: Full-time registration is defined as no fewer than three and no more than four graduate course units per quarter. TGS 500, 588, and 512 all convey full-time status.

Q: What is the required residency for the Doctor of Philosophy?

A: Eight quarters of residency to be completed consecutively over two years, including summers, in courses authorized by the Graduate Faculty for graduate credit.

Q: I'm taking time off and/or working only on my dissertation. Do I need to be registered?

A: Yes – per the [continuous registration policy](#), you must be registered in each fall, winter and spring term in which you are still working towards degree completion.

#### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

Q: I do not need the NU insurance because I have coverage from a provider outside of NU. Do I need to inform anyone?

A: Graduate students registered full time are automatically enrolled in the Northwestern University student health insurance program unless they fill out the coverage selection waiver. The coverage selection form can be accessed via [CAESAR](#). For more information visit the [health insurance website](#).

Q: How do I cancel my health insurance coverage because I am graduating or have had a change in status?

A: Students enrolled in the NU health plan, who are graduating or leaving the University at the end of a term and wish to cancel their enrollment in the plan, must submit a request in writing to the Health Insurance office at 633 Emerson Street by last day of each term.

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-student-services/index.html>

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Q: What forms do I need to submit for the Master's Degree?

A: Using TGS Forms in [CAESAR](#), the Application for a Degree and Master's Degree Completion must be completed for the Master's Degree.

Q: What forms do I need to submit for the Doctor of Philosophy?

A: Using TGS Forms in [CAESAR](#), the following forms will need to be submitted over the course of your studies: Candidacy (submitted by your program by the beginning of your fourth year), Prospectus (submitted by the beginning of your fifth year), Final Exam form, Application for Degree form. In addition, you should submit your dissertation through UMI ProQuest and complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates. See [the PhD Degree Completion webpage](#) for additional information.

Q: I accidentally submitted a form via [CAESAR](#) -> TGS Forms. How can I delete the form?

A: Send an email to [gradservices@northwestern.edu](mailto:gradservices@northwestern.edu) to request help with a form submitted in error.

Q: What is candidacy and what is the filing requirement for candidacy?

A: Students must be admitted to [candidacy](#) no later than the beginning of their fourth year of study. The program (DGS or DGS designate) should submit the Qualifying Exam form via TGS Forms in CAESAR to indicate that a student has been admitted to candidacy.

Q: What is the prospectus and what is the filing requirement for the prospectus?

A: Students must have a [prospectus](#) (dissertation proposal) approved by their committee no later than the beginning of the fifth year of study. Students must submit the Prospectus Form via TGS Forms in CAESAR.

Q: What are the deadlines for filling forms?

A: Deadlines for filing forms can be found on [TGS academic calendar](#).

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-student-services/index.html>



Q: How do I submit my dissertation, and where can I find the formatting requirements?

A: Dissertations must be submitted electronically through the [ProQuest's website](#). Dissertations should be formatted according to the [Dissertation Formatting](#)

#### **GRADUATION AND HOODING CEREMONIES**

Q: When are degrees awarded?

A: Degrees are awarded in August, December, March, and June.

Q: Is there a graduation and hooding ceremony in August, December, or March?

A: No, neither the [Commencement](#) nor hooding ceremonies take place at any time other than June. August, December, and March graduates are encouraged to participate in the following June ceremonies.

#### **VISAS**

Q: How to apply for visa or renew the existing visa?

A: Visas for postdoctoral are handled first by the department and then by the international office. The paperwork associated with visas varies by visa type and issuing country. Please check with the International Office on current processing times for visa applications or renewals:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/international/>

## **XXIV. Appendix**

### **Graduate Courses relevant to students in all areas:**

- \*REL 440 Topics in Buddhism
- \*REL 446 Sanskrit Texts
- \*REL 447 Exegesis of Islamic Texts
- \*REL 460 Topics in Christianity
- \*REL 462 Topics in American Religious History & Contemporary Practice
- \*REL 468 Critical Theory and Religion (co-listed with German department GER 408)
- \*REL 471 Studies in Religions
- \*REL 472 Studies in the Literature of Religions
- \*REL 473 Studies in Buddhism
- \*REL 474 Studies in Judaism
- \*REL 475 Studies in Christianity
- \*REL 476 Studies in Islam
- \*REL 481-1,2 Theories of Religion

First quarter: Classical theories of religion from the 18th through 20th century. Second quarter: Contemporary issues and methods in the study of religion.

- \*REL 482 Themes in Comparative Religion

### **RELIGIOUS STUDIES UNDERGRADUATE COURSES APPROVED FOR GRADUATE CREDIT**

- REL 301 Hindu Epics: Mahābhārata
- REL 302 Hindu Epics: Rāmāyaṇa
- REL 305-1, 2 Introduction to Sanskrit
- REL 312 Buddhism and Gender
- REL 313 Tibetan Religion and Culture
- REL 315 Buddhist Auto/biography
- REL 316 Religion and the Body of China
- REL 375 Foundations of Christian Thought
- REL 376 Christianity and Making of Modernity
- REL 377 Christian Thought in Global Perspective

### REL 339 Topics in Judaism

Theoretical and methodological approaches to comparative work in religious studies. Content varies.

Note: Many upper-level undergraduate courses are approved for graduate credit. Typically, they are altered for graduate students with some additional reading, occasional tutorial discussions with the professor, and weightier writing projects.

\* = May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

How to Format a Dissertation: A Guide

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Field of Dissertation Formatting

By

Alexandra Israel

EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

March 2016

## Arrangement of the Dissertation

Each dissertation must be arranged in the following order. Specific information about each section is on the following pages. Italicized pages are optional.

- Title page
- *Copyright page*
- Abstract
- *Acknowledgment page*
- *Preface*
- *List of Abbreviations*
- *Glossary*
- *Nomenclature*
- *Dedication*
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables, Illustrations, Figures, or Graphs
- *Introduction*
- Text body
- Tables, Illustrations, Figures, Graphs<sup>1</sup>
- References
- *Appendices*
- *Vita*

---

<sup>1</sup> If not incorporated into the main body of the text, these items should immediately follow the text. They should not be placed at the end of chapters.

## **Formatting and Layout Requirements**

### **Page Size**

- The page size should be 8.5 x 11”, standard US Letter size (not A4).

### **Margins**

- There should be one inch margins on all sides, including page numbers.
- Page numbers should conform to margin requirements and be placed at least 1” from the top and right sides of the page, as appears in this document. A tutorial for page number placement appears later in this document.

### **Spacing**

- The preliminary pages (abstract, dedication, acknowledgements, table of contents) and main body text must be double spaced.
- Quotations, captions, items in tables, lists, graphs and charts may be single spaced.

### **Pagination**

- Every page in a dissertation is numbered, *except the title page*.
- Page numbering will begin on the second page with Arabic numeral 2.
- There should be no blank pages.
- On pages of the dissertation that are formatted with landscape orientation, the page number must appear in lower right-hand corner of the page, so that it would appear in the correct location if the page were rotated to portrait orientation. A landscape page tutorial appears later in this document.

### **Fonts**

- Any legible font is permitted except script, italic, or ornamental fonts. Fonts must be embedded.
- Font size should be equivalent in scale to 10pt. Arial or 12pt. Times New Roman.

### **Foreign Language Dissertations**

- A student in a foreign language department who writes the dissertation in a language other than English is required to write a 10-20 page summary of the dissertation in English and include it as an appendix.
- The abstract of a foreign language dissertation must be in English.

## Dissertation Content Requirements

### Title Page

The title page should conform to the sample below. See also the title page of this document.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
Title of Dissertation in Title Case
A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
for the degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
Field of (program name)
By (author full name)
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS
(Month Year of Degree Conferral)

- **Dissertation Title<sup>2</sup>**
  - The title of the dissertation should be in mixed case; the first and last words and all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs are capitalized. Articles (a, an, the), coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, for, nor), and prepositions, regardless of length, are lowercased unless they are the first or last word of the title or subtitle. Only acronyms should be set in full capitals.
  - Special characters cannot be used in titles. Use word substitutes in place of formulas, symbols, superscripts, or Greek letters.
- **Academic Field**
  - The academic field designated on the title page must be selected from the [official list provided by The Graduate School](#).
- **Date**
  - There is no comma between the month and year. This date should correspond to the expected month of degree conferral.

---

<sup>2</sup> For dissertation title best practices, see Appendix A.

## **Copyright Page**

- If you choose to copyright your manuscript, a copyright notice must appear on a separate page following the title page. It should read as follows:

© Copyright by (your name) 20\_\_  
All Rights Reserved

For more information about copyrighting your dissertation, please see the information on the TGS [website](#).

## **Abstract**

- Inclusion of the abstract within the preliminary pages of the dissertation is required.
- Mathematical formulas, photographs, diagrams, and other illustrative materials are not recommended for inclusion in the abstract.

## **Optional Prefatory Pages**

- Acknowledgment page
- Preface
- List of abbreviations
- Glossary
- Nomenclature
- Dedication

## **Table of Contents**

- The format of the table of contents should conform to the guidelines in an approved style manual.
- It is important that the table of contents accurately reflect the outline and organization of the manuscript.

## **Lists of Tables, Illustrations, Figures, or Graphs**

- These lists should reproduce the specific titles and page locations of all illustrative materials.

## **Body of the Text**

- Chapters should follow a logical outline, with a clear distinction between chapters, main heads within chapters, and subordinate heads within the main heads.
- The outline and organization of the main body of the text should be accurately reflected in the table of contents.
- All non-textual elements (e.g., tables, graphs, and images) must be described in the text.



### **Tables, Illustrations, Figures, Graphs**

- If not incorporated into the main body of the text, these items should immediately follow the text, not at the end of chapters.
- Margin requirements must be met on all pages that contain charts, graphs, tables, or illustrations.

### **References**

- Each dissertation must include references to document the text.
- These references may be included at the bottom of the page or at the end of the text, but cannot be placed at the end of each chapter.
- The format for references must conform to the guidelines in an approved style manual.

### **Appendices (optional)**

- The format for the appendices must conform to the guidelines in an approved style manual.

### **Vita (optional)**

- It is recommended that each copy of the dissertation include a brief vita containing the author's name, place of birth, education, relevant professional experience, and publications. The vita page is numbered.

### **Supplementary Materials (optional)**

If supplementary materials—such as audio, video, and spreadsheets—are part of your dissertation or thesis, you can submit them as supplementary files during the online submission process. See Appendix B for additional details.

- Do not embed media files in your PDF.
- Upload media files as supplementary files. During online submission, you will be asked to upload any supplementary files.
- Describe files in your abstract. Add a description of each supplementary file in your abstract.

## Guides and How-To's

This section will provide tutorials on some of the most common dissertation formatting problems. The vast majority of these tutorials have to do with page numbers, which are the single most common error that comes up in dissertation reviews. After reading these tutorials, you will be able to format your page numbers to start and stop in the right places, respect the margin requirements, and appear in the proper place on landscape pages<sup>3</sup>.

### How to Number Your Pages Correctly

As you may recall from Chapter 1, every page in the dissertation should have a page number, with the exception of the title page. The numbering should begin on the second page with “2”. The easiest way to make sure the title page is not numbered, while ensuring that every other page is numbered, is by changing the header settings. In order to do this, click into the header so that the “Header & Footer Tools” menu appears. Then, make sure the “Different First Page” option is selected. Now you can delete the page number from the title page while still leaving page numbers on the rest of the page.

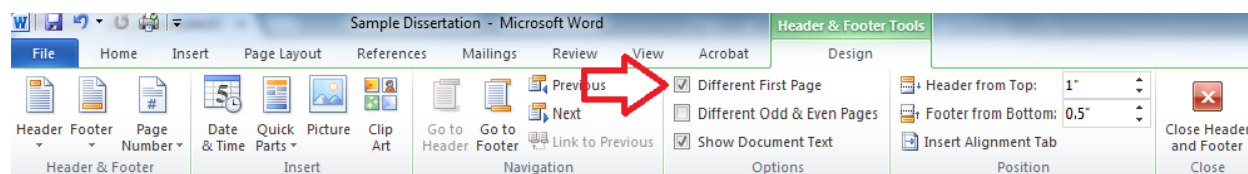


Figure 1 - Header and Footer Tools menu with "Different First Page" option selected.

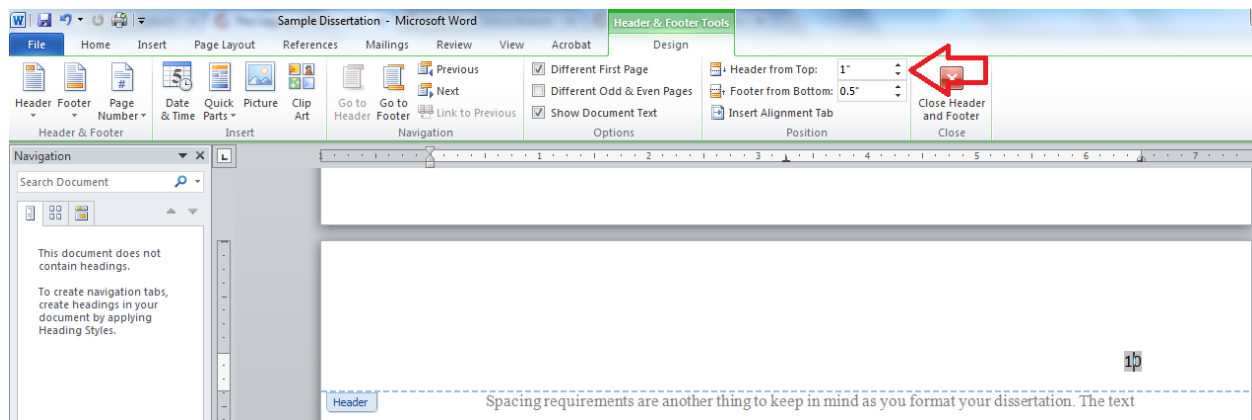
The single most common formatting error that appears in NU dissertations is the placement of page numbers. Page numbers need to be placed in the upper right-hand corner of the page, and they need to conform to margin requirements. These margin requirements are important because of ProQuest's archiving process; when dissertations are archived, the pages are cropped, and if text, figures, or page

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<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, these tutorials are designed to help with dissertations written in Microsoft Word. If you are using LaTeX, these guides will be of no use. Of course, if you are using LaTeX, you probably aren't having these problems to begin with.

numbers are placed too close to the edge of the page, they run the risk of being cut off. Assuming your margin settings are correct, Microsoft Word should automatically place page numbers one inch from the right side of the page; it's the requirement that they be placed one inch from the top of the page that causes problems, as the default header setting puts only a half-inch margin between the page number and the top of the page.

The solution to this problem can be found in the "Header and Footer Tools" menu. Once the menu is open, set the "Header from Top" distance to one inch. This setting adjustment will ensure that any text in the header, including page numbers, is placed one inch from the top of the page<sup>4</sup>.



**Figure 2 - Header and Footer Tools menu, with "Header from Top" set to one inch.**

In some cases, you might want to insert a landscape page into your thesis in order to accommodate a table or figure. The important thing to remember is that the page numbers on landscape pages need to be placed so that they will appear in the upper right-hand corner of the page *if the page were rotated to portrait orientation*. The following tutorial will show you how to include a landscape page and properly position page numbers.

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<sup>4</sup> If you change your header settings after setting up your Table of Contents, you will probably want to double-check that the Table of Contents and any other numbered lists (List of Figures or List of Tables) are still accurate, as changing the distance of the header from the top of the page can throw off the numbering.

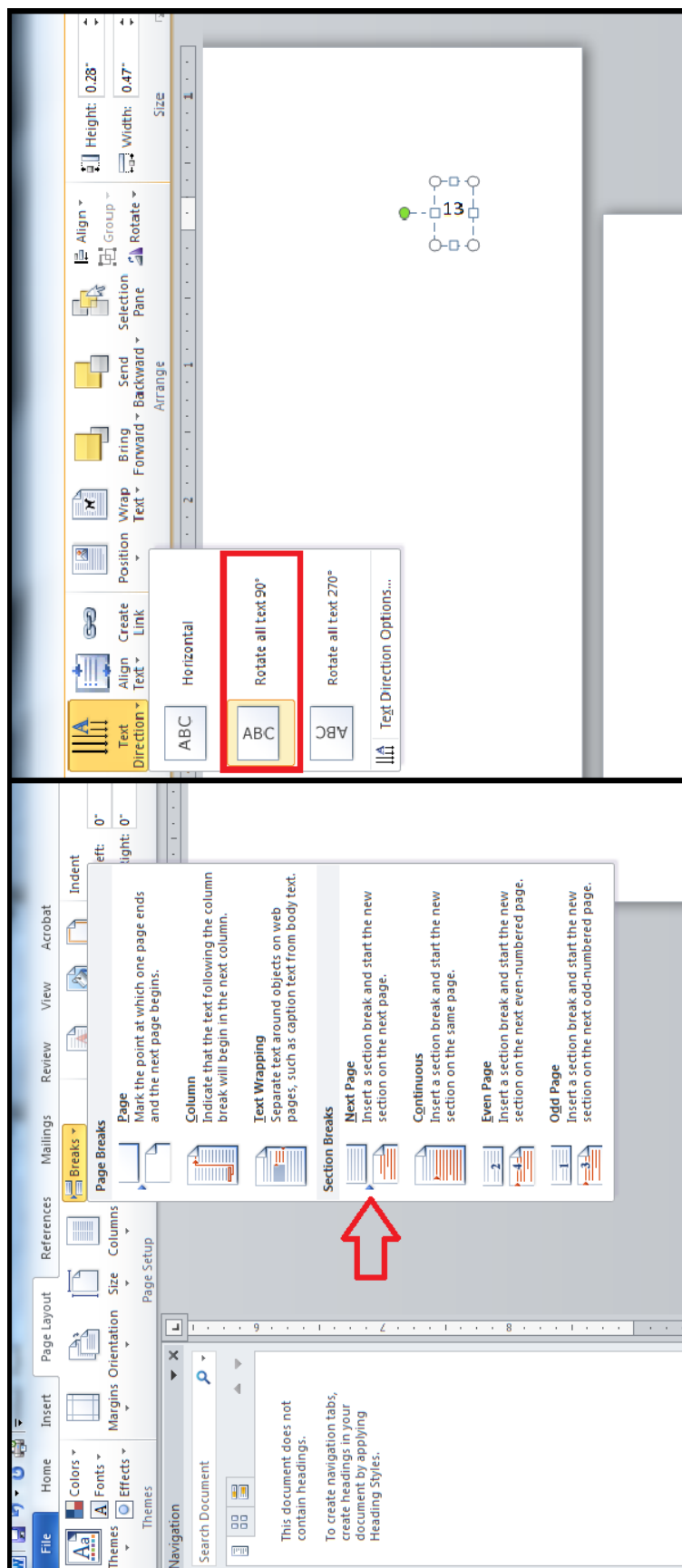


Figure 3 – Page Layout menu with “Next Page” section break selected; Drawing Tools menu with “Rotate all text 90°” selected under the “Text Direction” heading.

In order to insert a landscape page into a document with portrait orientation, you will need to start a new section. In order to do this, use the “Page Breaks” tool within the Page Layout menu, and select the type of section break labelled “Next Page,” as seen in Figure 3. Once you have created the new section, select the new page and change the orientation (also in the Page Layout menu) to landscape.

To add a page number to your landscape page, insert a text box by going to the Insert menu and selecting “Text Box.” Now, reposition your text box so that it appears in the lower right-hand corner of the page. Make sure that your text box is positioned one inch from the edges of the page. You can then type in the appropriate page number. In order to get the number to face the correct direction, click into the text box and select the Drawing Tools menu. From there, select the “Text Direction” sub-menu and choose the “Rotate all text 90°” option, as seen in Figure 3. Your page number should now be facing the appropriate direction. In order to put the remaining pages back into landscape format, add another section break and change the page orientation back to “Portrait.” You may have to add the page numbers back into the header in this section, in which case you should double-check that your page numbers are still positioned properly.

## Appendix A – Dissertation Title Best Practices

Dissertations are a valuable resource for other scholars only if they can be easily located. Modern retrieval systems generally use the words in the title to locate a document. It is essential that the title be an accurate and meaningful description of the content and that obscure references be avoided. Please use these guidelines when formulating a dissertation title:

- **CASE:** The first and last words and all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs (if, because, as, that, etc.) are capitalized. Articles (a, an, the), coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, for, nor), and prepositions, regardless of length, are lowercased unless they are the first or last word of the title or subtitle. Only acronyms should be set in full capitals.  
Examples:  
Power and Consumer Behavior  
Outpatient Treatment for Children: Organizational Practices as Predictors of Recovery  
A Comparison of the Methodologies for Determining Achievement in High School
- **HYPHENATION:** Consult the dictionary as to whether a word is hyphenated. In general, do not hyphenate words beginning with the prefixes co, non, pre, post, or re unless there is a possibility of confusion (co-op, post-master's) or the root word begins with a capital letter (post-Renaissance). Hyphenate words beginning with the prefix self. Hyphenate compounds used as adjectives (decision-making) but not as nouns (decision maker). Part-time is always hyphenated. When more than one prefix is joined to a base word, hyphenate the prefixes standing alone (micro- and macroeconomics). Do not hyphenate fundraising, freelance, yearlong, health care, African American, Asian American.  
Examples:  
Great Nonfiction Works of the Nineteenth Century (Instead of: Great Non-fiction Works of the 19th Century)
- **SPELLING AND GRAMMAR:** Dissertation titles should be spell-checked and dictionary spelling of words should be used. Use “and” rather than “&,” and spell out names of centuries and other numbers usually spelled out in text.  
Example:  
The Labour Party in Perspective and Twelve Years Later
- **SPECIAL CHARACTERS:** No special characters should appear in the dissertation title (SES/CAESAR cannot accommodate special characters). Terms or phrases that include special characters should instead be written out.  
Examples:  
Evaluation of DNA Hybridization and Cleavage Capabilities of Peptide Nucleic Acid-Titanium Dioxide (instead of: Evaluation of DNA Hybridization and Cleavage Capabilities of PNA-TiO<sub>2</sub>)  
The Role of TGF-beta Variants in Cancer (instead of: The Role of TGF-β Variants in Cancer)
- **ITALICIZATION:** Italics should only be used in dissertation titles when referring to the title of a published work, foreign language words, gene names, scientific names as appropriate, or other words that are usually italicized.  
Examples:  
Techniques in *Drosophila* Circadian Biology  
Mechanisms of Differentiated Cell Function *in vitro*
- **APOSTROPHES:** Do not use to form plurals (it should be 1940s, not 1940's) unless it would be confusing without (thus A's and B's, not As and Bs; p's, not ps). Possessives of singular nouns ending in s are formed by adding 's (e.g., Russ's dog).

## Appendix B – File Format Recommendations for Supplemental Files

Software applications used to open files and their specifications tend to become harder to find over time, and some formats will be difficult or impossible to read in the future. The file formats with the best chance of survival have open specifications, are high quality, and are in relatively wide use. Ensuring these formats can be accessed or read in the future is key to their long-term preservation.

Please follow these recommendations when making format choices for all content that is part of your dissertation submission. Also, make sure the format is an uncompressed version, highest quality compressed version, or the final production version. This will help maximize potential for long term preservation and accessibility.

Unfortunately, it's not possible to provide a single list of file formats that are appropriate for all use cases, but this list is a good starting point. Also, please exercise caution when using proprietary formats and digital rights management (DRM) software that may make viewing content difficult or impossible to access in the future. If you have any questions, please contact the University Libraries at [library@northwestern.edu](mailto:library@northwestern.edu). Your question will be routed to staff with the appropriate staff to help you.

**Simplified Guidelines/File Format Recommendations** (for more detailed specifications, see the [Library's scholarly communication libguide](#).)

- **Audio — Highly recommended: AIFF (.aif, .aiff) or WAV (.wav)** . Moderately recommended: MP3 (.mp3), AAC (.mp4, .mp4a, .aac), FLAC (.flac) or ALAC (.m4a).
- **Video — Highly recommended: Uncompressed Quicktime Movie (.mov); uncompressed AVI (.avi)**. Moderately recommended: MPEG-1, MPEG-2 or MPEG-4 encoded video (.avi, .mpg, .mpeg, .mov, .mkv, .mp4).
- **Virtual Reality/3D — Highly recommended: X3D (\*.x3d)**. Please talk with a Northwestern Digital Librarian to determine best output settings and format.
- **Image - Highly recommended: Full color images @ 600dpi or higher saved as JPEG2000 Lossless (.jp2) or TIFF 24-bit, uncompressed (.tif, .tiff)**. Moderately recommended: lossy compressed formats limited to JPEG (.jpg, .jpeg), JPEG2000 (.jp2), TIFF (.tif, .tiff), or PNG (.png) at highest quality possible.
- **Text - Highly recommended: Open Document Text (.odt), UTF-8 Unicode text (.txt), or PDF/A (.pdf)**. Moderately recommended: Rich Text Format (.rtf).
- **Presentation - Highly recommended: Open Document Presentation (.odp)**. Moderately recommended: PDF/A (.pdf) for images only.
- **Spreadsheet - Highly recommended: Open Document Spreadsheet (.ods)**. Moderately recommended: Comma separated value CSV (.csv) or Tab-delimited text file (.txt).

## Northwestern University: Timeline for Completion of the PhD Degree

\* MSTP students will not follow this timeline. Please see the MSTP Web site for information on MSTP program completion.

\* The Graduate School requires a minimum of nine graded courses.

\* Residency credit is no longer awarded through TGS but is handled by programs. A program may waive any requirements above nine graded courses based on coursework from another institution.

\* If a student takes a leave of absence or does not register for summers in quarters one through eight, the Tuition Model and Registration timelines will be delayed accordingly, but not the Milestones timeline, unless other arrangements are made with TGS.

	Year One				Year Two			
	Q1 - Fall	Q2 - Winter	Q3 - Spring	Q4 - Summer	Q5 - Fall	Q6 - Winter	Q7 - Spring	Q8 - Summer
<i>Tuition model</i>	Full Rate (funding guaranteed)				Full Rate (funding guaranteed)			
<i>Registration</i>	3-4 units of coursework or 590	3-4 units of coursework or 590	3-4 units of coursework or 590	3-4 units of coursework or 590	3-4 units of coursework or 590	3-4 units of coursework or 590	3-4 units of coursework or 590	3-4 units of coursework or 590
<i>Milestones to be achieved</i>	Coursework towards <a href="#">residency requirement</a> . A minimum of nine graded courses are required by TGS. Individual programs may require more graded courses.				Coursework towards <a href="#">residency requirement</a> . A minimum of nine graded courses are required by TGS. Individual programs may require more graded courses.			
<i>Forms to be completed</i>								

	Year Three				Year Four			
	Q9 - Fall	Q10 - Winter	Q11 - Spring	Q12 - Summer	Q13 - Fall	Q14 - Winter	Q15 - Spring	Q16 - Summer
<i>Tuition model</i>	Advanced Rate (funding guaranteed)				Advanced Rate (funding guaranteed)			
<i>Registration</i>	TGS 500 and/or coursework	TGS 500 and/or coursework	TGS 500 and/or coursework	TGS 500 and/or coursework	TGS 500 in addition to non-required coursework			
<i>Milestones to be achieved</i>	Coursework towards program requirements (if applicable). Students must complete all required courses (including incomplete grades/F grade make-up) and be admitted to candidacy (PhD Qualifying Exam) by the end of the twelfth quarter. Students who have completed their program requirements will register for TGS 500 in addition to any non-required (extra) coursework. Students who have not completed their program requirements will register for courses as determined by their program.				Students must complete their <a href="#">Prospectus</a> (proposal of dissertation topic) before the end of the sixteenth quarter.			
<i>Forms to be completed</i>	PhD Qualifying Exam form (submitted by department. No student entry)				PhD Prospectus form (submitted by student via TGS Forms in <a href="#">CAESAR</a> ; approved online by department)			

	Year Five				Years Six through Nine			
	Q17 - Fall	Q18 - Winter	Q19 - Spring	Q20 - Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
<i>Tuition model</i>	Advanced Rate (funding guaranteed)				Advanced Rate or Continuous Registration			
<i>Registration</i>	TGS 500 in addition to non-required coursework				TGS 500 if receiving funding; TGS 512 if unfunded			
<i>Milestones to be achieved</i>					Degree deadline - students have 9 years from matriculation to complete the PhD degree. Only rarely under extenuating circumstances will students be granted permission to continue beyond 9 years.			
<i>Forms to be completed</i>	Students who are completing their degree will complete the following forms: (1) Application for Degree via TGS Forms in CAESAR; (2) Final Exam Form via TGS Forms in CAESAR which will be approved by the department (3) NRC Survey of Earned Doctorates; (4) Online submission of dissertation via UMI ProQuest							

\* Those who do not complete in 9 years must enroll in TGS 513 (if not funded) or TGS 500 (if receiving funding or unfunded international student) for the remaining quarters and pay tuition accordingly.



# Student Progress Milestone Cheat Sheet

## Year One

- ☐ **Hold planning meeting** with DGS and adviser by end of second week of fall quarter
- ☐ **Complete 9 graded courses** (including 481-1 and possibly 481-2, 482 )
- ☐ **Attend first year review** late spring quarter
- ☐ **Register for 590** for summer residency

\*Department will arrange meeting location and time, then file review

## Year Two

- ☐ **Complete 7 graded courses** (3 for the non-TAing quarter, and 2 courses during the 2 TAing quarters)
- ☐ **Complete 481**, 482 if needed
- ☐ **Register for 2 quarters 490** (with professor for whom student TAs)
- ☐ **Register for two quarters of 570** (second year paper course): 570-1, 2, 3
- ☐ **Optional: Apply for Master's Degree** (after completing second year paper, 11 other graded courses, and 5 quarters of residency, with no X or Y grades)

\*File 2 forms through TGS, the Application for Degree form and Master's Degree Completion form

\*Department will approve forms through GSTS after student submits

## Year Three

- ☐ **Register for 2 quarters 490** (with professor for whom student TAs)
- ☐ **Register for TGS 500 exam prep or Rel 499 independent study** while preparing for exams
- ☐ **Complete Theory & Method Exam**, 4 hr. written, reading week of fall quarter
- ☐ **Complete Field Exam 1**, oral, reading week of winter quarter (Order of written and oral field exams may be reversed, but student must take one of each)
- ☐ **Complete Field Exam 2**, written, reading week of spring quarter (Order of written and oral field exams may be reversed, but student must take one of each)
- ☐ **Complete all language requirements** by the end of the 12th quarter. \*Exceptions: Toronto doctoral level Latin exam taken post-candidacy; fourth languages taken post-candidacy if ne

\*Obtain approval through Milestones Form from committee, examiner and/or adviser after each exam. Fill out PhD Qualifying form in GSTS after all exams have been passed.

\*Department reserves UofC language exams

## Year Four

- ☐ **Plan for GA, TA, RA-ships and Research Time**
- ☐ **Dissertation prospectus defense**, 2 hr. discussion with committee, by early Sept. fall quarter (complete TGS Prospectus form online)
- ☐ **Apply to outside fellowships**. Contact Office of Fellowships for guidance (deadlines variable, usually early fall quarter).

\*Obtain approval through the Milestone Form from committee and/or adviser after passing the prospectus defense. Fill out PhD Prospectus form in GSTS.

\*Department approves prospectus form through TGS

## Year Five

- ☐ **Graduate Student Colloquium** (early dissertation workshop/ dissertation chapter presentation)
- ☐ **Continue dissertation writing and research**

~ See handbook for additional details~