Committees of the Faculty and Areas of Study

Following are brief descriptions of the three committees of the faculty and the eleven areas of study in the Divinity School, including faculty resources, general guidelines, area written examinations, and course offerings. Guidelines and exam bibliographies for each area may be found online at the Divinity School’s website (http://divinity.uchicago.edu). The courses listed are illustrative, and there may be additions, deletions, or changes as the faculty deems advisable. In addition, some of the courses listed in a specific area may be cross-listed in other areas. Ministry courses are listed in the section on Ministry Programs. The courses of instruction in the various areas of study are numbered as follows:

- 30000–39900 Basic courses at the graduate level
- 40000–49900 Advanced and specialized courses at the graduate level
- 50000–59900 Reading, seminar, research, and dissertation courses

These courses are preceded by the following abbreviations for their areas of study:

- AASR Anthropology and Sociology of Religion
- BIBL Bible
- DVPR Philosophy of Religions
- HCHR History of Christianity
- HIJD History of Judaism
- HREL History of Religions
- ISLM Islamic Studies
- RAME Religions in America
- RETH Religious Ethics
- RLIT Religion, Literature, and Visual Culture
- THEO Theology

Committees of the Faculty

Committee on Constructive Studies in Religion

The Committee on Constructive Studies in Religion brings together faculty and students who understand their work to be largely in the service of constructive (rather than purely historical or exegetical) goals. Students will be expected to focus their work within one of the three areas comprised by the Committee, but they will also be expected to gain an understanding of the relations among these areas, and to do at least one of their written examinations outside the Committee.

The Committee on Constructive Studies in Religion supplements the written Ph.D. examinations offered in its areas with three Committee-wide examinations:
1. Metaphysics,
2. Hermeneutics and Religious Reflection, and
3. Issues in Contemporary Theory.

Subject to the requirements of his or her area of concentration, a Ph.D. student in the Divinity School may stipulate a Committee-wide examination as one of his or her four written examinations.

**Faculty:** D. Arnold, R. Coyne, K. Culp, A. Davidson, M. Fishbane, S. Fredericks, K. Hector, D. Hopkins, M. Kapstein, J-L. Marion, F. Meltzer, P. Mendes-Flohr, R. Miller, W. Otten, S. Schreiner, W. Schweiker, B. Ziporyn

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**COMMITTEE ON HISTORICAL STUDIES IN RELIGION**

The Committee on Historical Studies in Religion concentrates on the development of Western religious traditions, primarily Judaism and Christianity, from their origins to the present. Special areas of interest include the formation and interpretation of the Jewish and Christian scriptures, the history of Jewish thought, as well as the social, cultural, and intellectual history of Christianity in all periods.

The Committee on Historical Studies in Religion supplements the written Ph.D. examinations offered in its areas with one Committee-wide examination: History of Comparative Exegesis: Jewish and Christian. Subject to the requirements of his or her area of concentration, a Ph.D. student in the Divinity School may stipulate the Committee-wide examination as one of his or her four written examinations.


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**COMMITTEE ON RELIGION AND THE HUMAN SCIENCES**

The Committee on Religion and the Human Sciences engages in the humanistic study of religious traditions and phenomena, and studies literature and society in relation to religion. Faculty and students associated with the Committee give primacy to humanistic and social scientific methods of study that have become established in the academic community during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They examine, evaluate, and utilize many of the analytic tools and conceptual categories of the human sciences. Though each of the areas that constitutes part of the Committee may draw on both the methods and materials of the other areas, each has its own distinctive profile. History of Religions emphasizes historical, phenomenological, and comparative studies; Anthropology and Sociology of Religion concentrates on the social and cultural context of religious experiences, communities, and practices; and Religion and Literature focuses on the critical and interpretive study of literary texts.

**Faculty:** W. Doniger, A. Doostdar, S. Hammerschlag, M. Kapstein, K. Krause, B. Lincoln, F. Meltzer, J. Robinson, R. Rosengarten, C. Wedemeyer.
Areas of Study

Anthropology and Sociology of Religion

The ASR area studies religious phenomena from a social scientific point of view. This view is based on the strategy to explain all social phenomena as if they were nothing but products of the dynamics of social relations. This perspective has been rather successful and has been appropriated by many other, especially historical, disciplines. However, it should not be mistaken for an ontological statement.

The dynamics of social relations can be analyzed from a more social structuralist or more culturalist perspective. Social structuralists (from systems theories to network theories) tend to explain cultural phenomena more or less as derivative of structures of social relations. Culturalists (from anthropological theories of culture to interpretative sociological approaches) maintain that structures of social relations and cultural structures of meaning mutually constitute and influence each other and therefore have to be studied in their dialectical relationship.

The ASR area regards structures of social relations alone as an insufficient foundation for the understanding and explanation of social phenomena. If human action is centrally based on interests, these interests are shaped not only by the position of actors in a social structure but also by the ways in which actors interpret that position. In other words, “interests” are not naturally given but culturally and socially shaped as well as subjectively appropriated and interpreted.

Firmly grounded in an approach that treats the study of social structures and culture as interrelated, the ASR area’s major questions revolve around topics like the following: What is the role played by religious actors and institutions in a given social/cultural setting? What is the contribution of religions in the legitimation or contestation of authority? How are domains of religious interests socially and culturally configured? How does religion impact processes of social transformation or is impacted by them? How do religions contribute to the shaping of a specific habitus?

Accordingly, the ASR area studies religious phenomena as social and cultural facts and constructs, which can be apprehended through textual sources or through the ethnography of contemporary social settings, or through a combination of both methods.

Written Examinations

Students have to take two exams in the area, and two exams in other areas of the Divinity School, chosen in consultation with their advisor.

ASR offers six examinations. ASR1 and ASR2 assess the ways in which “religion” as an analytical concept has been defined and theorized in anthropological and sociological literature. The first exam focuses on classical theoretical perspectives on religion from the early mid-twentieth century; the second examines theories from the middle of the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century to the present. ASR3 addresses the formation and transformation of religious groups and ideas in the contexts of colonialism, post-colonialism and globalization. ASR4 focuses on theorizing the relationship between Islam and power in sociology, anthropology
as well as political science. ASR5 explores different religious visions of history, like utopianism, millenarianism, messianism, and fundamentalism. ASR6 focuses on French sociology and anthropology of religion.

1. Classical Theories
2. Contemporary Theories
3. From Colonialism to Globalization
4. Modern Islam and Power
5. Religious Ideologies and Utopias
6. French Sociology and Anthropology of Religion

Previously Offered Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website. (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses)

Classic Theories of Religion (Wedemeyer)
Magic, Science, and Religion (Doostdar)
Islam, Media, Meditation (Doostdar)
Ethnographies of the Muslim World (Doostdar)
Religion in Modern Iran (Doostdar)
Walter Benjamin (Doostdar and Lincoln)
Anthropology of Religion (Doostdar)
Shi’ism and Modernity (Doostdar)
Religion and the City (McRoberts)
Ethnographic Methods (McRoberts)
Urban Structure and Process (McRoberts)

BIBLE

The Bible area seeks to understand and interpret the Jewish and Christian scriptures and related texts in their historical and cultural settings as well as in their subsequent roles as canonical texts for Judaism and Christianity. Contributing to these goals are four distinct areas of research: the historical contexts of these scriptures from ancient Israel to the Roman empire, the history and transmission of biblical and post-biblical literature, the history and methods of exegesis, and biblical and post-biblical theology.

Written Examinations

The area offers two exams in Hebrew Bible and two in New Testament. Ph.D. students concentrating in Bible must take the two exams offered in one of these, and select their third exam from the two offered in the other.

1. History and Religion of Israel
2. Hebrew Scripture
3. Christian Origins
Previously Offered Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website. (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses)

Introduction to the Hebrew Bible: Jewish Thought and Literature (Stackert)
Philosophy: Plato’s Phaedrus (Martinez)
Jewish History and Society I: Ancient Jerusalem (Chavel)
The Book of Hosea (Chavel)
Job and Theology: Between Biblical Hermeneutics and Philosophical Theology (Fishbane)
Corpus Hermeticum (Martinez)
The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles (Klauck)
Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts (Klauck)
Novellas of the Hebrew Bible (Chavel)
The Deuteronomic Source (Stackert)
Galatians and James: Traditions in Conflict? (Mitchell)
The Letter to the Hebrews (Klauck)
Illuminating the Bible in Byzantium (Krause)
The Gospel of John (Klauck)
The Book of Samuel: MT-LXX-DSS (Chavel)
Early Christian Rhetoric (Mitchell)
The Wisdom of Solomon and the New Testament (Klauck)
Introduction to Papyrology (Martinez)
Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi (Stackert)
Jewish and Christian Responses to Biblical Criticism (Stackert and Mendes-Flohr)
Plutarch of Chaireneia and the New Testament (Klauck)
Judges (Stackert)
Origen of Alexandria (Martinez)
Biblical Interpretation in the Qumran Scrolls (Stackert)

History of Christianity

The History of Christianity area focuses on one major western religious tradition, in itself and in its interactions with other religions and cultures across time. The area fosters knowledge of the range of communities claiming an identity as “Christian” from the first through the twenty-first centuries, as well as allowing for individual specialization in a particular movement or historical moment, including ancient Christianity (to Constantine), late antique and medieval Christianity, the Reformation and early modernity, the Puritan movement, and American Christianity and American religion in general. Coursework and guided research emphasize the acquisition of essential skills of documentary and artifactual
interpretation, critical appraisal of a range of methodological approaches to the material, and a sophisticated appreciation of the tasks, goals and audiences of historiographical writing. The construction of this area is based on the assumption that there are major issues that apply and extend to all periods (such as forms of biblical interpretation, means of adjudicating “orthodoxy” and “heresy,” the relationship between Christian communities and the social order, forms of institutional and personal piety), as well as particular expressions of those dynamics in different chronological and geographical settings. It also assumes the need for integration of intellectual, social, institutional and cultural histories for interpreting the body of existing evidence and adequately addressing most important questions about this particular religious tradition in its various manifestations. Students in the HC area are encouraged to formulate an interdisciplinary approach to their research, through coursework throughout the areas of the Divinity School and the University (including the Department of History).

Written Examinations

A student in the area is expected to take three of the four examinations, and must complete at least one major course in the area of the examination they are not taking.

The History of Christianity area offers four written examinations:

1. Ancient (to 600 CE)
2. Medieval (600-1300)
3. Early Modern (1300-1600)
4. Modern (1600-present)

Previously Offered Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses). (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/history-christianity)

Kings, Culture, and the Three Religions of Medieval Spain (Nirenberg)
Christianity and Slavery in America, 1619-1865 (Evans)
Colloquium: Ancient Christianity (Mitchell)
Religion in Modern America, 1865-1920 (Evans)
Colloquium: Peter Lombards’ Sentences (Fulton Brown)
Aquinas’ Summa Theologicae: Its Structure and Pedagogy (Otten and McGinn)
History of Christian Thought I and II (Otten)
History of Christian Thought III (Schreiner)
History of Christian Thought V: Modern Religious Thought (Hector)
The Christian Right: History and Historiography (Evans)
Race and Religion in the U.S. in the 20th Century (Evans)
Readings in Luther (Schreiner)
Early Modern Catholicism (Schreiner)
Late Medieval Christianity (Schreiner)
Art and Ritual in Byzantium (Krause)
Virginity and the Body from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages (Pick)
Historical Theological Debates: Predestination and the Augustinian Legacy in the Carolingian Era (Otten)
Colloquium: The Psalms in Medieval Liturgy and Exegesis (Fulton Brown)
The Age of Walter Rauschenbusch: History and Historiography of the Social Gospel (Evans)
The Long 1960s: Religion and Social Change (Evans)
The Spirituality of the Sixteenth Century (Schreiner)
Renaissance and Reformation (Schreiner)
Calvin’s Institutes (Schreiner)
The Veneration of Icons in Byzantium: History, Theory, and Practice (Krause)
Byzantine Art: Special Topics in Iconography (Krause)
Eschatology and Embodiment (Otten)

HISTORY OF JUDAISM

In the History of Judaism Area we concentrate on Jewish thought, from antiquity to the present. Midrash and piyyut, Biblical interpretation and belles-lettres, Sufism and Kabbalah, philosophy and theology – these are the main subjects that we explore, in historical and hermeneutical context. The main focus is textual, the study of ideas as they emerge in the vast and varied literary production of the Jews throughout time. Although students are required to gain expertise in one historical period and geographical realm, they are encouraged also to acquire a sense for the development of ideas through the ages, from Biblical to Second Temple, Hellenistic and Rabbinic Judaism, into the Medieval period – in the Islamic world and Christian Europe – into Modern times, in Germany, France, Italy, Israel and America.

In addition to the courses listed below, students are encouraged to consult course offerings in the Departments of History, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and Philosophy; the Committee on Social Thought; and the Law School, where deemed relevant.

Written Examinations

Ph.D. students concentrating in History of Judaism take two of the three exams and select their remaining exam from a different area.

1. Ancient Judaism
2. Medieval Judaism
3. Modern Judaism

Recent Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses). (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/history-judaism)
HIJD 30704 Jewish Liturgical Poetry  
Michael Fishbane

HIJD 44201 The Study of Modern Jewish Thought: Theory and Method  
Paul Mendes-Flohr

HIJD 47901 Job and Theology: Between Biblical Hermeneutics and Philosophical Theology  
Michael Fishbane

HIJD 35112 Philosophy, Talmudic Culture, and Religious Experience: Soloveitchik  
Arnold I. Davidson

HIJD 42600 Spinoza and Mendelssohn  
Paul Mendes-Flohr

HIJD 44603 The Bible in Arabic  
James T. Robinson

HIJD 46100 Franz Rosenzweig’s Star of Redemption Part I  
Paul Mendes-Flohr

HIJD 46200 Franz Rosenzweig’s Star of Redemption Part II  
Paul Mendes-Flohr

HIJD 51600 Maimonides on the Problem of Evil  
James T. Robinson

HIJD 30402 Poetics of Midrash  
Michael Fishbane

HIJD 30602 The Jewish Interpretation of the Bible in the Middle Ages  
James T. Robinson

HIJD 49910 Advanced Readings in Midrash  
Michael Fishbane

HIJD 51500 Maimonides as Mystic  
James T. Robinson

D 45202 The Citation in Jewish Religious Culture  
Michael Fishbane

HIJD 39204 Studies in Rabbinic Midrash: Pesikta de-Rav Kahana  
Michael Fishbane

HIJD 38504 Levinas and Talmud  
Michael Fishbane

HIJD 53357 Philosophy and Theology of Judaism  
Arnold I. Davidson

HIJD 46010 Martin Buber’s Philosophy of Religion  
Paul Mendes-Flohr

HIJD 50206 Brauer Seminar: Jewish and Christian Responses to Biblical Criticism  
Jeffrey Stackert, Paul Mendes-Flohr

HIJD 36802 Jewish Writings of Hannah Arendt  
Paul Mendes-Flohr

HIJD 38504 Levinas and Talmud  
Michael Fishbane

HIJD 32702 Messianism in Modernity  
Sarah Hammerschlag

HIJD 45400 Readings in Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed
James T. Robinson
HIJD 47602 Jewish Responses to Continental Philosophers: Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Heidegger
Paul Mendes-Flohr
HIJD 44702 The Other and the “Exotic” in Postwar Jewish Writing
Sarah Hammerschlag
HIJD 41100 Animal Spirituality in the Middle Ages
James T. Robinson
HIJD 35115 Topics in the Philosophy of Religion: Challenge of Suffering from Job to Primo Levi
Arnold Davidson
HIJD 45500 Medieval Commentaries on Ecclesiastes
James T. Robinson, Michael Fishbane
HIJD 50200 Readings in Arabic Religious Texts
James T. Robinson, Michael Sells - See more at: https://divinity.uchicago.edu/history-judaism#sthash.SoyTVcPa.dpuf

HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

The History of Religions area approaches religion as an exclusively human phenomenon, via the methods of the social sciences and the humanities. It is concerned to theorize at a high level of generalization, informed by broadly comparative and empirical research, and to carry out high-level empirical research informed by theoretical reflection. It pays self-conscious and explicit attention to problems of epistemology, terminology, category formation, method and motive. Irreverent by temperament and sometimes on principle, it insists that:

1. the Western monotheisms should not be the only paradigms and/or objects of legitimate study,
2. religion cannot be reduced to belief, but also includes issues of practices, institutions, communities, habitus and other factors that often operate below the level of consciousness, and
3. interpretation involves critical probing and systematic interrogation of the idealized self-representations of any religious phenomenon.

Those who work within the History of Religions are expected to become thoroughly acquainted with the development of the History of Religions as an academic discipline, and to have a sophisticated understanding of the theories and methods that are relevant to contemporary research in the field. Each student must deal creatively with the tension that results from an emphasis on the importance of historically contextualized studies on the one hand, and of wide-ranging theoretical and comparative research on the other.

Students in the History of Religions develop a special expertise in the study of at least one particular religious tradition. This involves learning to read and/or speak the relevant language (or languages) and becoming familiar with the relevant historical and cultural background. In addition, each student is expected to become informed about a variety of other religious traditions, both historical and contemporary. Students utilize the extensive resources provided by the University
as a whole, enhancing their study of particular religious traditions by work in Area Studies departments (such as SALC, NELC, EALC, and Classics) and refining their critical method by work in disciplinary departments (such as History and Anthropology).

Written Examinations
1. Special Area
2. Theory
   a. Classical Theory
   b. Contemporary Theory
3. Another special area or thematic exam
4. An exam in another area of study

Previously Offered Courses
Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses). (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/history-religions)

Classical Theories of Religion (Wedemeyer)
Pahlavi Language and Literature (Lincoln)
Contemporary Theory and the Study of Religion (Lincoln)
Early Zoroastrianism (Lincoln)
Jainism: An Indian Religion and Its Contributions to Philosophy (Kapstein)
Second Year Sanskrit: Readings in the Mahabharata (Doniger)
Many Ramayanas (Doniger)
Buddhism in the Americas (Wedemeyer)
Ritual in South Asian Buddhism (Wedemeyer)
Manuscripts, Material Culture, and Ritual Practice (Copp)
Readings in Tibetan Buddhist Texts (Kapstein)
Medieval Zoroastrianism (Lincoln)
Spells, Talismans, Alchemy, Zen: Language and Religious Practice in China and Japan (Copp)
Gender Norms and Deviations in South Asian Texts (Doniger)
Ghosts and Unquiet Spirits (Lincoln)
Problems in the History of Religions (Doniger)
Indian Philosophy I: Origins and Orientations (Arnold)
Indian Philosophy II (Kapstein)
The Ghost Dance of 1890 (Lincoln)
Asceticism and Civilization (Collins)
Mahabharata in English Translation (Doniger)
Indian Buddhism (Wedemeyer)
Interactions Between Jewish Philosophy and Literature During the Middle Ages (Robinson)
Walter Benjamin (Doostdar and Lincoln)
Autobiography (Wedemeyer and Rosengarten)
Ethical and Theological Issues in Hinduism (Doniger)
Tibetan Buddhism (Wedemeyer)
Religions of Tang China and the Eastern Silk Road (Copp)
Animal Spirituality in the Middle Ages (Robinson)
Historiography for Historians of Religion (Lincoln)
Origin Stories: Religion and Science Narrate the World (Doniger, with Lorraine Daston)
Buddhist Narratives (Collins)

ISLAMIC STUDIES
The Islamic Studies area engages in the study of Islam as a textual tradition inscribed in history and as understood particular cultural contexts. The area seeks to provide an introduction to and a specialization in Islam through a variety of expressions (literary, poetic, social, and political) and through a variety of methods (literary criticism, hermeneutics, history, sociology, and anthropology). It offers opportunities to specialize in fields that include Qur’anic studies, Sufi literature, Islamic law and theology and Islamic philosophy. In addition to the courses listed below, students are encouraged to consult related course offerings in other areas of the Divinity School and in other university departments such as History, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and South Asian Languages and Civilizations.

Students without an advanced degree apply for admission to the A.M. program of the Divinity School. Students applying from within the University of Chicago M.A. program will be expected to have completed three courses in the Islamic Studies area or the equivalent (to be established by consultation and petition) by the end of the M.A. All applicants for Ph.D. admission should have a strong preparation for the study of Islam, including reading knowledge of classical and Modern Standard Arabic, significant background in the study of the human or social sciences, and previous coursework in Islamic history, religion, civilization, or literature. The application letter should specify the applicant's background in the study of Arabic. If at the time of application the applicant has not already completed the equivalent of three years of Arabic, the candidate should indicate the program of current study (including possible summer study) that will demonstrate that at the time of matriculation, he or she will have completed the equivalent of three years of Arabic.

Students at the Ph.D. level are expected to have completed course work in advanced Arabic, in which there is a sustained engagement with Arabic primary sources, or to have carried out significant independent study at an equivalent level, before submission of a dissertation proposal. After consultation with a faculty advisor in Islamic Studies, students may petition to replace either French or German with one of the major languages of literature and scholarship within Islam.
Written Examinations

The Ph.D. qualifying examinations consist of four written examinations and an oral examination based on a research paper submitted for the occasion, in consultation with the student’s advisor in the Islamic Studies area. At least two of the four written examinations should be taken in the area of Islamic Studies. At least one of the four examinations should be taken in an area outside of Islamic Studies.

Examinations in Islamic Studies include:

- S1-Qur’anic Studies
- IS2-Sufi Literature
- IS3-Islamic Philosophy
- IS4-Islamic Modernities
- IS5-Islamic Origins
- IS6-Special Topic

Previously Offered Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses) .

- Islamic Thought and Literature I (Qutbuddin)
- Islamic Classics and the Printing Press (El-Shamsy)
- Blood Libel: Norwich to Riyadh (Sells)
- Islamic Thought and Literature II (Lewis)
- Comparative Mystical Literature: Islamic, Jewish, and Christian (Sells)
- The Bible in Arabic (Robinson)
- Readings in Arabic Religious Texts (Sells)
- Readings in Al-Mizan, ‘Allama Tabataba’I’s Qur’anic Exegesis (Doostdar)
- Maimonides on the Problem of Evil (Robinson)
- Readings in the Text of the Qur’an (Sells)
- Islam, Media, Meditation (Doostdar)
- Ethnographies of the Muslim World (Doostdar)
- Maimonides as Mystic (Robinson)
- Arabic Sufi Poetry (Sells)
- Religion in Modern Iran (Doostdar)
- Interactions Between Jewish Philosophy and Literature During the Middle Ages (Robinson)
- Walter Benjamin (Doostdar and Lincoln)
- Shi’ism and Modernity (Doostdar)
- Animal Spirituality in the Middle Ages (Robinson)
- Sefer Yetzirah, The Book of Creation (Robinson)
PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIONS

The Philosophy of Religions area considers philosophical issues arising from various religious beliefs and practices, and from critical reflection upon them. Work in this area requires historical understanding of the discipline as it developed in the West, but students also specialize in the philosophical thought of a non-Western religious tradition, as well as to do constructive philosophical work that draws upon the resources of more than one tradition.

Written Examinations

Ph.D. students concentrating in the Philosophy of Religions area are required to take three exams offered by the area. All students are required to take PR1, “The Modern Background,” and one of two exams focused on particular thinkers and trends from the twentieth century: either PR2, “Anglo-American Philosophy of Religions in the Twentieth Century,” or PR3, “Continental Philosophy of Religions in the Twentieth Century.” A third exam emphasizing work in the field is also required, and its selection will typically be a function of the student’s particular area of focus. For students pursuing a program of comparative work, this will normally be one of the exams under the rubric of PR4, “Comparative Philosophy of Religions” (e.g., an exam in Indian Buddhist philosophy); for students not pursuing a program of comparative work, the third exam will normally be the other of the two twentieth-century exams. In some cases, students not pursuing a program in comparative work may select as the third exam one of those offered by the Committee on Constructive Studies (“Metaphysics,” “Hermeneutics and Religious Reflection,” or “Issues in Contemporary Theory”). The student’s examining committee should include at least four faculty examiners, three of whom should be members of the Philosophy of Religions faculty.

1. The Modern Background
2. Anglo-American Philosophy of Religions in the Twentieth Century
3. Continental Philosophy of Religions in the Twentieth Century
4. Comparative Philosophy of Religions

Previously Offered Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses).

Theological Sources in Philosophical Reflection (Coyne)
Nietzsche: Nihilism and Faith (Coyne)
Michel Foucault: Self, Government, and Regimes of Truth (Davidson)
Seminar: Contemporary Critical Theory (Meltzer)
Jainism: An Indian Religion and Its Contributions to Philosophy (Kapstein)
Introduction to Hermeneutics (Coyne)
Philosophy, Talmudic Culture, and Religious Experience: Soloveitchik (Davidson)
Painting, Phenomenality, Religion (Marion)
Readings in Chinese Buddhism (Ziporyn)
Readings in Daoist Texts (Ziporyn)
Alfred North Whitehead: Metaphysics and Ethics (Gamwell)
Brauer Seminar: Intentionality and Belief (Coyne and Arnold)
Readings in Tibetan Buddhist Texts (Kapstein)
Lacan and Religion (Meltzer)
The Concept of Religion Between Philosophy and Theology (Marion)
Pantheism and Atheism in Philosophy: Spinoza, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer (Ziporyn)
Readings in Tiantai: Zhanran’s ‘Diamond Scalpel’ and the Buddha-Nature of Insentient Beings (Ziporyn)
Readings in Madhyamaka (Arnold)
Recent Work in Philosophy of Religions (Arnold)
Theological Realism (Hector)
Philosophy of Language Seminar: Quotations, Pictures, Words (Stern)
Indian Philosophy I: Origins and Orientations (Arnold)
Indian Philosophy II (Kapstein)
Levinas and Talmud (Fishbane)
Anglo-America Philosophy of/and Religion (Hector)
Readings in Daoism: Zhuangzi and Zhuangzi Commentary (Ziporyn)
Studies in Atheist Spirituality: Schopenhauer+Emerson=Nietzsche? (Ziporyn)
Philosophy and Theology of Judaism (Davidson)
Topics in the Philosophy of Religion: Challenge of Suffering from Job to Primo Levi (Davidson)
Readings in Madhyamaka (Arnold)
American Religious Naturalism Following James (Arnold)
Classical Confucianism from Confucius to Yinyang and the Philosophy of Change (Ziporyn)
Introduction to Phenomenology: Husserl (Marion)
Kant on Religion and Rational Theology (Coyne)
Alternative Epistemologies (Hector)
Derrida’s ‘Of Grammatology’ (Hammerschlag)
The Infinite: From Hegel to the Present (Coyne)

RELIGION, LITERATURE, AND VISUAL CULTURE

Religion, Literature, and Visual Culture studies the interactions of the religions with cultural forms and practices, with particular reference to art. It pursues this study utilizing the tools of poetics, aesthetics, and theories of interpretation to understand both the ways that the religions harness the human imagination, and the ways that the human recourse to imaginative expression often some would say always—engages religion. Although this phenomenon is arguably concurrent
with all of human history, the academic enterprise of Religion and Literature is by comparison young. It took its initial explicit form in response to the conviction, articulated most forcefully by Paul Tillich in the mid-twentieth century, that in order to understand religion we must engage our “cultural condition.” In its relatively short life the field has witnessed the more widely recognized shifts in the study of religion that had their advent just as Tillich’s own remarkable career was concluding, and the field has since aimed toward more self-conscious engagements with comparison (both within a culture and across cultures) and with history. We recognize the texts and artifacts we study to be both more knowingly pluralistic, and often more intentionally eclectic, than had been assumed. We aim to address the pressure this exerts on conventional rubrics of cultural study such as nation, language, “high art” and—not incidentally— the self-proclaimed provenances of the religions. As a consequence a comparative frame of reference, both within a culture and across cultures, has become essential. This broader compass of cultural practice has also led to a revision of the area’s interests in the history of interpretive theory, to engage not only literary criticism but hermeneutics, biblical interpretation, and aesthetics. The area seeks to be interdisciplinary in its work, so that students pursue sustained work in other areas of study in the Divinity School and in other departments and committees of the University as informed and directed by the area’s emphasis on the acquisition the skills of close, sustained interpretive analysis and broad engagement with issues in the theory of interpretation.

Written Examinations

1. History of Criticism and Literary Theory
2. Classic Texts in Religion and Literature
3. Genres of Literature

Previously Offered Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website. (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses)

Jewish Liturgical Poetry (Fishbane)
Levinas and Derrida on Religion and Literature (Hammerschlag)
Irony (Hammerschlag and Rosengarten)
Comparative Mystical Literature: Islamic, Jewish, and Christian (Sells)
Styles of Catholicism: Kahlo, O’Connor, Weil (Rosengarten)
Poetics of Midrash (Fishbane)
Art and Religion in Late Antiquity (Elsner)
The Citation in Jewish Religious Culture (Fishbane)
Illuminating the Bible in Byzantium (Krause)
Art and Ritual in Byzantium (Krause)
Arabic Sufi Poetry (Sells)
The Narration of America in Literature and Film (Rosengarten and Howell)
Interactions Between Jewish Philosophy and Literature During the Middle Ages (Robinson)
The Other and the ‘Exotic’ in Postwar Jewish Writing (Hammerschlag)
Autobiography (Wedemeyer and Rosengarten)
Theory of Literature: The Twentieth Century (Hammerschlag)
Pilgrimmage in Antiquity and the Early Christendom (Elsner)
Animal Spirituality in the Middle Ages (Robinson)
History of Criticism: 16th-19th Centuries (Rosengarten)
Between Vienna and Hamburg: From Deutschland to America: The Writing of Art History Between 1900 and 1960 (Elsner)
The Veneration of Icons in Byzantium: History, Theory, and Practice (Krause)
Byzantine Art: Special Topics in Iconography (Krause)
Derrida’s ‘Of Grammatology’ (Hammerschlag)

RELIGIONS IN AMERICA

Religions in America is an interdisciplinary program that focuses on religious ideas, practices, institutions, and movements in colonial North America (1600-1787) and the United States (1787-present). The program is interdisciplinary, bringing together faculty and students with historical, sociological, ethnographic, comparative, and theoretical interests in American religion. Students in the program can write dissertations on a wide variety of topics: for example, Native American religion, black Muslims in America, the rise of new forms of religious media, Jewish and Christian attitudes toward the American claim to be a "new Israel," the meaning of American "secularism" in the late twentieth century, the response of different religious communities to free-market capitalism, the emergence of New Thought in the late-nineteenth century, and the Hindu, Muslim, or Buddhist experience in America.

Religions in America stands at the crossroads of several other areas of study at the Divinity School, and interdisciplinary collaboration is expected. Students who are particularly interested in American Christianity have the choice of concentrating in either Religions in America or the History of Christianity area in the Divinity School, which considers American Christianity in relationship to the longer Christian tradition from antiquity to the present. Similarly, students who are interested in other global traditions in America (for example, Buddhism or Hinduism), can choose to concentrate in either Religions in America or the History of Religions area.

Requirements for the Ph.D. in Religions in America are:

1. Course Work and Residency: There is a four-year scholastic residency requirement for every doctoral student in the Divinity School. With supervision by the primary academic advisor, students develop a course of study that will help them prepare for comprehensive exams, taken by the end of the fourth year.

2. Languages: All doctoral students at the Divinity School are required to pass the University of Chicago language examinations in French and German with a "High Pass" (P+). (Students can petition to substitute another language for French
or German if the other language is crucial to reading scholarship in their field.) One must pass the required language exams before taking the doctoral exams and submitting a dissertation proposal. Students who intend to do research on non-English speaking or immigrant groups (for example, Hindus in America) must gain appropriate competency in the relevant language or languages.

3. Comprehensive Exams: All doctoral students in the Divinity School are required to take four comprehensive examinations followed by a cumulative oral examination on the written exams and a piece of their own research, the "orals paper." All students in "Religions in America" will take the following two field exams:

- I. The Religious History of the United States and Colonial North America (administered by Curtis Evans).
  This exam approaches American religion from a historical perspective and includes a wide variety of books on both particular religious traditions (e.g. Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism) and themes (e.g. millennialism and missions).

- II. Secularization, Pluralism, and Migration in America (administered by Omar McRoberts).
  This exam approaches American religion from a sociological and ethnographic perspective, focusing particularly on the themes of secularization, pluralism, and migration.

The student should choose the other two exams in consultation with the advisor, and will articulate that plan in a course of study petition submitted to the Committee on Degrees. A student who plans to focus on Christian traditions in the United States must take a third exam that focuses on Christianity in another area at the Divinity School: for example, the History of Christianity, Ethics, Theology, or Religion and Literature. A student focusing on non-Christian traditions must take a third exam (e.g. in History of Religions or Philosophy of Religions) focusing on that tradition: for example, Buddhism or Hinduism.

The student must submit an "orals paper" prior to taking exams that will be discussed during the oral defense. The orals paper should represent a significant piece of original research that demonstrates the student's intellectual interests.

4. Dissertation Proposal: Upon successful completion of the comprehensive exams, the student must formulate and submit a dissertation proposal together with a dissertation committee of at least three faculty members: a primary adviser and two readers. Students interested in studying non-Christian traditions (for example, Judaism, Hinduism, or Buddhism) are strongly encouraged too have two dissertation advisors from the Divinity School—an Americanist and a specialist in the particular tradition they intend to study. The dissertation proposal is submitted to the Committee on Degrees for formal approval.

5. Dissertation: The final requirement of the Ph.D. is the dissertation, which must represent substantial and original research in the student's chosen field of expertise.

Previously Offered Courses Include:
Christianity and Slavery in America, 1619-1865 (Evans)
Religion in Modern America, 1865-1920 (Evans)
The Christian Right: History and Historiography (Evans)
Race and Religion in the U.S. in the 20th Century (Evans)
Buddhism in the Americas (Wedemeyer)
The Narration of America in Literature and Film (Rosengarten and Howell)
The Age of Walter Rauschenbusch: History and Historiography of the Social Gospel (Evans)
The Long 1960s: Religion and Social Change (Evans)
Religion and the City (McRoberts)
African American Gospel Music (Butler)
Music and Faith (Butler)
Ethnographic Methods (McRoberts)
Urban Structure and Process (McRoberts)
Music and Creolization (Butler)
Music and Trance (Butler)

REASIOUS ETHICS

The Religious Ethics area is concerned with the meaning of religion for the conduct of the lives of persons and the ordering of societies, and, therefore, with problems of the good life, justice, and the common good. Study in the history and methods of religious and non-religious ethics is essential to work in the area. The examination of specific moral problems and the study of comparative religious ethics require work in the relevant languages, social and historical sciences or in the professions. Students are thereby encouraged to pursue work in pertinent areas of the University outside of the Divinity School.

Written Examinations

A student concentrating in Religious Ethics will take three examinations in the area, including at least two of the following:

1. Philosophical Ethics;
2. Theological Ethics;
3. Ethics and Political Life.

The student must select another, third examination from those offered by the area. A fourth examination must be selected from another area of study.

A student concentrating in Religious Ethics will submit for the oral examination a twenty- to twenty-five-page paper that typically engages one major thinker, relevant primary materials, and also important secondary scholarship with respect to a question pertinent to the student’s scholarly aspirations. This paper should, accordingly, explicate and assess the thinker(s) chosen and also advance, through that engagement, a constructive argument on the question.
The paper should be distributed to examiners at least two weeks prior to the oral examination.

The distinctive purpose of the oral examination is to engage the submitted paper and pursue other lines of inquiry, especially, but not limited to, the written examinations.

1. Philosophical Ethics
2. Theological Ethics
3. Ethics and Political Life
4. Ethics and the Social Sciences
5. Comparative Religious Ethics
6. Moral Problems

Previously Offered Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/courses). (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/religious-ethics)

Methods and Theories in Comparative Religious Ethics (Schweiker)
Reinhold Niebuhr: Theology and Ethics (Gamwell)
Seminar: Greek Tragedy and Philosophy (Nussbaum)
Alfred North Whitehead: Metaphysics and Ethics (Gamwell)
Seminal Texts in the History of Medical Ethics (Sulmasy)
God and Morality (Schweiker)
Contemporary Religious Ethics I and II (Miller)
The Ethics of Belief (Miller)
Utilitarian Ethics (Nussbaum)
History of Theological Ethics I and II (Schweiker)
Cicero on Friendship and Aging (Nussbaum)
Contemporary Political and Social Ethics (Miller)
Moral Problems: Poverty and Social Justice (Schweiker)
Religion and Democracy (Gamwell)
Theories of Medical Ethics (Sulmasy)

THEOLOGY

The Theology area is concerned with the historical study of the self-understanding of a religious tradition, mainly Christianity and Judaism, and with the constructive interpretation of its meaning and truth for the contemporary world. Students in theology must, thereby, address questions of the history of theology, the definitive characteristics of theological claims and discourse, the criteria of meaning and of truth within a tradition, methods of theological reflection, the warrant (if any) for revision within traditions, and the manifold ways to answer or to sustain the criticism of theological ideas and religious beliefs. Students in theology thereby
demonstrate their historical competence, methodological sophistication, and also grounding in some specific form of theological reflection.

Written Examinations

Students concentrating in Theology take three exams from those offered by the area. These choices should be determined, in consultation with the relevant faculty, on the basis of the student’s intended scholarly focus in the field. All students are required to take at least two of the three offered examinations in the History of Christian Thought (i.e., exams 1, 2, and 3). In all Theology examinations attention will be given to the use of scripture in the pertinent tradition as a theological source and norm, and the student will be expected to know the exegetical foundations of the theological positions discussed. The examinations will also test historical understanding and the ability to deal critically and, when appropriate, constructively with theological texts. Students must also choose a fourth examination from another area of study.

Given the purpose of the examinations in the Theology area stated above, all examinations will have “set bibliographies,” meaning thereby that examinations are not tailored to the student’s dissertation topic. Additionally, a student may not take an examination of a perspective, theologian, or doctrine that is the principle focus of his or her intended dissertation.

1. History of Christian Thought, 150–1325 (Ancient and Medieval)
2. History of Christian Thought, 1277–1600 (Early Modern)
3. History of Modern Religious Thought (1600–1950)
4. A Constructive Theological Perspective (e.g., liberation, feminist, mystical, process theologies)
5. Theological Ethics/Moral Theology
6. A Major Theologian or Doctrine (e.g., Augustine; Christology)

Research Paper

In addition to taking the written examinations, a student concentrating in Theology will submit for the oral examination a research paper that typically engages a thinker or problem, relevant primary materials, and also important secondary scholarship with respect to the student’s scholarly aspirations. This paper is to be no longer than twenty-five, double-spaced pages, and must follow rubrics of The Chicago Manual of Style. Students should consult with their adviser about the most suitable paper for submission for the examination. If possible, the paper should represent some preliminary thoughts about a possible thesis topic.

As a preface research paper, the Theology area would like each student to submit a one-page summary of the significance of the paper in light of the student’s future work in the area. This statement should include:

1. a summary of the thesis of the paper;
2. a statement of how this paper relates to the student’s current theological interests.
The completed paper with preface should be distributed to all of the examiners at least two weeks prior to the time of the oral examination.

Previously Offered Courses

Course offerings vary by year. For current course listings, and an archive of past courses, please see our website (http://divinity.uchicago.edu/theology).

Jewish Liturgical Poetry (Fishbane)
Theological Sources in Philosophical Reflection (Coyne)
Reinhold Niebuhr: Theology and Ethics (Gamwell)
Job and Theology: Between Biblical Hermeneutics and Philosophical Theology (Fishbane)
Aquinas’ Summa Theologiae: Its Structure and Pedagogy (Otten and McGinn)
History of Christian Thought I and II (Otten)
History of Christian Thought III (Schreiner)
History of Christian Thought V: Modern Religious Thought (Hector)
Introduction to Hermeneutics (Coyne)
Painting, Phenomenality, Religion (Marion)
Black Theology: 1st Generation (Hopkins)
Readings in Luther (Schreiner)
Early Modern Catholicism (Schreiner)
The Concept of Religion Between Philosophy and Theology (Marion)
Poetics of Midrash (Fishbane)
Introduction to Theology (Hector)
Late Medieval Christianity (Schreiner)
Black Theology: 2nd Generation (Hopkins)
Theological Realism (Hector)
The Citation in Jewish Religious Culture (Fishbane)
God and Morality (Schweiker)
Levinas and Talmud (Fishbane)
Virginity and the Body from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages (Pick)
Historical Theological Debates: Predestination and the Augustinian Legacy in the Carolingian Era (Otten)
Philosophy and Theology of Judaism (Davidson)
History of Theological Ethics I (Schweiker)
History of Theological Ethics II (Schweiker)
The Spirituality of the Sixteenth Century (Schreiner)
Being Human (Hopkins)
Theologies from the Underside of History (Hopkins)
Renaissance and Reformation (Schreiner)
Moral Problems: Poverty and Social Justice (Schweiker)
Introduction to Theology (Hector)
Introduction to Phenomenology: Husserl (Marion)
Kant on Religion and Rational Theology (Coyne)
Theology and Cultural Studies (Hopkins)
Calvin’s Institutes (Schreiner)
Contemporary Models of Theology (Hopkins)
Approaches to Suffering: Theological Perspective and Contemporary Meditations (Culp)
Eschatology and Embodiment (Otten)
The Concept of Revelation Between Philosophy and Theology II (Marion)