

Degree Requirements, Religious Studies

Graduate handbook information is updated and maintained by each program. Graduate handbooks are available within each program's office and online at <https://utexas.box.com/v/UTAustinGraduateHandbooks>. Please contact the program with concerns or questions.

Master of Arts

To obtain the master's degree in religious studies, students must complete a total of 30 semester hours: either 27 hours of coursework and a three-hour report; 24 hours of coursework and a six-hour thesis; or 30 hours of coursework with no thesis or report. Students who wish to pursue the no-thesis, no-report degree option must obtain approval in advance from the Department of Religious Studies. Prior graduate coursework will be taken into consideration. All students must complete at least 18 semester hours of graduate coursework in religious studies. No more than six hours of upper-division undergraduate credit may be counted toward the degree. All students must complete a theory and methods course (Religious Studies 383M) and must participate in departmental and concentration colloquia.

Students also complete the core courses required for their area of specialization. Specific course numbers are available from the office of the graduate coordinator.

In addition, in consultation with a faculty advisor, each student identifies a related field outside the major field in which to complete six hours of graduate coursework. This coursework may be either from outside the department or in another area of religious studies. The related field must be approved by representatives of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Each student's progress is reviewed after the fourth semester of study by the Graduate Studies Committee. This committee makes one of three recommendations: that the student (1) proceed to the doctoral degree requirements upon satisfactory completion of the master's degree requirements; (2) be reviewed again before proceeding to the doctoral degree requirements; or (3) leave the program.

Doctor of Philosophy

A doctoral student in religious studies must complete 60 semester hours of coursework, including the doctoral seminar in religious studies (Religious Studies 384D), dissertation research and writing courses, and additional courses related to the student's concentration. Courses taken to complete the master's degree requirements (except for the master's report or thesis) also count toward the total number of hours. Students who enter with a master's degree from another institution may petition to have up to six hours of coursework (not including the thesis hours) transferred toward the doctoral requirements. While in residence, doctoral students must participate in the departmental and concentration colloquia.

Students enter the program having chosen one of the four areas of concentration. They must fulfill the foreign language requirements for the concentration. In addition, each student identifies a thematic topic that crosses geographical and temporal boundaries and completes other courses necessary for exam preparation. Each student's progress is reviewed during the eighth semester of study, at which time it is normally expected that the student has been admitted to doctoral candidacy.

To qualify for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree, students must complete the prescribed course of study in the concentration area and pass qualifying exams in four fields: (1) the major field; (2) the

supporting field(s); (3) the thematic field; and (4) the special topic or dissertation field. The exams consist of written essays for each field and an oral defense of the essays. Candidacy is also contingent upon regular participation in the departmental and concentration colloquia, as certified by the graduate advisor. To file for doctoral candidacy, the student must establish a dissertation committee and have a dissertation proposal accepted by the committee. Students then write the dissertation and defend it in a final oral examination before the dissertation committee. Students are expected to write the dissertation, have it approved, and pass the final oral examination within two years of admission to candidacy.