

PHD GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK  
*for the*  
Department of Religion

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Georgia

Spring 2025



**Department of Religion**

*Franklin College of Arts and Sciences*

**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

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## WELCOME

This PhD Handbook is your guide to the policies and practices of graduate study within the Department of Religion in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Georgia. Its intent is to help smooth your pathway in the program and call attention to issues that you need to be aware of at different stages of your PhD studies.

### 1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact information for the Department of Religion:

Dr. Derrick Lemons, Department Head  
Room 9 Peabody Hall  
[dlemons@uga.edu](mailto:dlemons@uga.edu)

*The Department Head, in collaboration with the Graduate Faculty, has the responsibility of oversight for all departmental academic programs and activities, including the MA and PhD program.*

Dr. Ingie Hovland, Graduate Coordinator  
Room 19 Peabody Hall  
[ingiehovland@uga.edu](mailto:ingiehovland@uga.edu)

*The Graduate Coordinator, under appointment of the Department Head and in collaboration with the Graduate Faculty, has direct supervision over the graduate MA and PhD programs.*

Ms. Sonya Tino, Divisional Manager  
Room 129 Peabody Hall (706-542-8988) / Room 132 Joe Brown Hall (706-542-5047)  
[sonyatino@uga.edu](mailto:sonyatino@uga.edu)

*The Divisional Manager assists with financial matters including payroll, tuition waivers, and travel grant applications.*

Ms. Kim Scott, Administrative Assistant II  
Room 3A Peabody Hall, 706-542-5356  
[kmscott@uga.edu](mailto:kmscott@uga.edu)

*The Administrative Assistant assists with office matters including office keys, building access, the printer/copier, the supply closet, maintaining mailboxes and listservs, and scheduling classrooms.*

## 2. THE DEPARTMENT

### OFFICES

The Department endeavors to provide a desk in one of the graduate student offices in Peabody Hall to all graduate students who need one. If you are given keys to an office, please keep the room locked at all times when you are not in the room.

The exterior doors to Peabody Hall are unlocked Monday through Friday from 7:00AM-7:30PM. The schedule can be extended any days we have classes, lectures, or student organization meetings outside of that schedule. Also note that the building is locked on holidays when UGA is closed. If you wish to access the building after regular business hours or on weekends, please speak with the office staff, who will provide access by your UGA ID card.

Every graduate student will have a mailbox in the Department's main office (Peabody Hall, room 3), where you will be notified of departmental business. Access to the main office from 5:30PM-7:30 AM will require a key and your UGA ID card.

The main office leads into the Department's conference room (room 3D). The conference room is sometimes occupied for meetings, but at all other times, you are welcome to make yourself coffee in the conference room and to meet there with fellow graduate students.

### SUPPLIES, COMPUTERS, AND THE COPIER/PRINTER

Supplies in the supply closet (room 3B) are for Teaching Assistant use in the classroom. Do not supply your students in the classroom with paper, pens, etc. They should bring their own and the department is not responsible for supplying them.

Graduate students will have access to one or two general use computers in the graduate student offices (you also have free access to general use computers in the Main Library). Each person using the machine is responsible for proper use of the machine. There are a number of people using these machines, so please do not download to the hard drive. You may download to a USB drive if you wish. Please remember to shut down the computers when not in use. Do not log off and leave the computer running. Requests for computer support should be submitted to the Franklin College Office of Information Technology at <https://franklin.uga.edu/office-information-technology>.

Faculty, office staff, and Religion graduate students are allowed to use the copier/printer and other office equipment in the main office (room 3). Copy codes for the copy machine will be assigned by the office staff. Keep copying to a limit. If you are making excessive copies your privileges will be revoked.

If you have a computer document you need to print, you can do so with the departmental copier/printer (or with the printers in the Main Library). The document must be a PDF or JPG document that you can save on a USB Drive. Please see the office staff for instructions. You can scan a document using the departmental copier/printer (or the scanners in the Main Library). Please see the office staff for instructions on how to do this. You can only scan documents as PDF or JPG documents and you can save them to a USB drive.

## GRADUATE STUDENT LISTSERV

The Department of Religion maintains a graduate student listserv (RELIGIONGRAD-L) which you will be subscribed to. The Department Head, Graduate Coordinator and office staff will communicate to you through this listserv, which will go to your UGA email account.

## COLLOQUIA AND SPECIAL SPEAKERS

The Department of Religion will have departmental colloquia and guest speakers sponsored by our department as well as speakers who will be co-sponsored by the department throughout the academic year. As a Religion graduate student, you are strongly encouraged to attend these events as part of your educational experience. If you are on an assistantship, you are required to attend the events as part of your assistantship award agreement.

## ASSISTANTSHIPS

Each year the faculty will meet during the Fall and Spring semesters to discuss and make decisions regarding Graduate Student Teaching Assistantships for the following year. Assistantships are awarded only to students actively pursuing a graduate degree in Religion and are normally awarded for a full academic year at a time. All full-time graduate students are reviewed for Assistantship awards, but our funds are limited. Terms of an assistantship will be outlined in an award letter. Students are expected to show reasonable progress toward degree requirements, to satisfy university and departmental requirements concerning selection of a major professor, approval of program of study, etc., and to perform their assigned assistantship duties as outlined by the Department and in a professional manner. Failure to abide by the terms of the assistantship could cause loss of part or all of the assistantship. It is the general policy of the Department not to extend financial assistance to doctoral level graduate students beyond five years.

### 3. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR A PhD IN RELIGION

Each candidate for a graduate degree in the Department of Religion must meet all requirements for the degree and comply with all policies set out by the Graduate School. It is your responsibility to be familiar with these requirements and policies. This Handbook does not replace the Graduate School policies. If you encounter any discrepancy between Department policies and Graduate School policies, please consult the Graduate Coordinator.

#### RESIDENCY AND CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

The UGA Graduate School mandates a residency requirement for doctoral degrees. At least two consecutive semesters of full-time coursework (i.e. enrollment for a minimum of 30 hours of consecutive coursework included on the PhD program of study) must be spent in resident study on the UGA campus.

In addition, all enrolled students pursuing graduate degrees at UGA must maintain continuous enrollment from matriculation (when they enter the program) until completion of all degree requirements. Continuous enrollment is defined as registering for a minimum of 3 graduate hours in at least two out of three semesters per academic year (the three semesters are Fall, Spring, Summer). Doctoral students must maintain enrollment during Fall and Spring semesters (breaking only for Summer semesters) until the residency requirement (30 hours) has been met. Doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy will be allowed to register at a tuition rate equivalent to the prevailing in-state tuition rate. If registration eligibility is lost, students must reapply to their programs and pay the applicable application fee to continue graduate study.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Once a student has entered the PhD program, the student, in consultation with their major professor, will choose a faculty advisory committee. The student must file the proper advisory committee form with the Graduate School. The form can be accessed at <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>.

The advisory committee consists of the major professor and a minimum of three additional graduate faculty members, all of whom agree to serve on the committee. The major professor cannot be a lecturer and must be a member of the Religion Department. The committee may include one graduate faculty from other departments in the university but cannot include lecturers unless they are graduate faculty (for either qualifying examination or dissertations). (Changes may be made in the advisory committee during a student's residence, especially at the dissertation stage.)

The advisory committee, in consultation with the student, is charged with planning the student's program of study. It is also charged with approving the program of study, arranging the comprehensive written and oral examinations, approving a subject for the dissertation, reading and approving the completed dissertation, and administering and approving the dissertation defense. The major professor has the primary responsibility for guiding your research, but you should consult all members of the advisory committee to draw upon their expertise in relevant areas.

#### PROGRAM OF STUDY

A PhD student, in consultation with their major professor and advisory committee, must complete a program of study (a list of courses) which constitutes a logical whole. The recommended program of

study is first laid out on a Preliminary Program of Study form. The form can be accessed at <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>. It must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator by the end of the student's first year. PhD students must submit a final Program of Study form before they advance to candidacy. The final program of study must be approved by the student's advisory committee. The form can be accessed at <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>.

The courses listed in the program of study for a PhD in Religion must fulfill the following coursework requirements.

All courses will be chosen only with the approval of the major professor.

Required - GradFIRST seminar and Pedagogy seminar:

Unless they have taken them as an MA student, all PhD students, regardless of track, are required to take the following courses and should register for them in their first semester:

GRSC 7001 GradFIRST seminar, 1 hr.

RELI 7771 Teaching Religious Studies, 3 hrs. (or GRSC 7770 or equivalent UGA pedagogy seminar; students may only take GRSC 7770 or equivalent if RELI 7771 is not being taught)

Note: On the PhD program of study, the GradFIRST seminar (GRSC 7001) is listed separately under "GradFIRST requirement," and the pedagogy seminar (RELI 7771, GRSC 7770, or equivalent) is listed separately under "Departmental requirements." These do not count toward the total number of hours on the program of study.

Required - Theories and Methods Seminar (3 hrs.):

Unless they have taken it as an MA student, all PhD students, regardless of track, are required to take the following course and should register for it in their first semester:

RELI 8770 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion, 3 hrs.

Note: At least 16 hours on the PhD program of study must be at 8000/9000-level (exclusive of 9000, 9005, and 9300). Therefore, if RELI 8770 was taken as an MA student, another 8000-level course will need to be taken to fulfill the required 16 hours of 8000/9000-level courses.

Required - Track Course (3 hrs.):

One of the following two courses is required for students on Track A, Religion in a Global Society:

RELI 8100 Religion and Globalization, 3 hrs.

or

RELI 8000 Religion in Global Society, 3 hrs.

The following course is required for students on Track B, Religion in the Americas:

RELI 8200 Religion in the Americas, 3 hrs.

Restricted 8000-level Electives (min. 12 hrs.):

PhD students should select 12 hours of 8000-level elective courses.

Some examples of 8000-level elective courses include, but are not limited to:

RELI 8000 Religion in Global Society, 3 hrs. (max 6 hrs.)

RELI 8005 Canons and Their Discontents, 3 hrs. (max 3 hrs.)

RELI 8100 Religion and Globalization, 3 hrs. (max. 6 hrs.)

RELI 8200 Religion in the Americas, 3 hrs. (max. 6 hrs.)

RELI 8210 Seminar in Traditional and Contemporary Topics in African Traditional Religion, 3 hrs. (max. 9 hrs.)  
 RELI 8450 Seminar in Problems and Topics in Biblical Research, 3 hrs. (max. 9 hrs.)  
 RELI 8460 Seminar in Problems and Topics in Judaism, 3 hrs. (max. 9 hrs.)  
 RELI 8480 Seminar in Problems and Topics in Islamic Research, 3 hrs. (max. 9 hrs.)  
 RELI 8490 Seminar in Problems and Topics in Asian Religions, 3 hrs. (max. 9 hrs.)  
 RELI 8500 Seminar in the History of Christian Thought, 3 hrs. (max. 9 hrs.)  
 RELI 8520 Seminar in Christian Theologians, 3 hrs. (max. 9 hrs.)  
 RELI 8610 Seminar Topics in Religion, Theory, and the Arts, 3 hrs.  
 PHIL (RELI) 8630 Seminar in Philosophy of Religion, 3 hrs. (max. 9 hrs.)  
 RELI 8700 Seminar in Problems and Topics in Religion Research, 3 hrs. (max. 12 hrs.)  
 SOCI 8030 Sociology of Religion, 3 hrs.

Note: Track A students are required to take either RELI 8100 or RELI 8000. If they take both courses, they can use one of them as an elective. Track B students can use both these courses as electives. RELI 8200 is a required course for Track B and can be used as an elective for Track A students. The content of all the seminars listed above will differ from year to year.

Electives (min. 4 hrs.):

4 hours minimum, any course(s) offered at UGA that the student can take to broaden their expertise in their area with the approval of their major professor.

Research Skills Requirement:

Reading knowledge of two modern secondary research languages plus any other primary languages deemed necessary and appropriate and approved by the student's major professor. The modern, secondary research languages must be other than English, languages in which contemporary scholars present and publish their research and discuss and critique other scholars' research. Primary languages are those in which the principal texts of one's research are written or spoken. This assessment shall be taken prior to the PhD comprehensive examination; no dissertation prospectus will receive final approval until all language requirements have been met. Students are expected to meet this requirement by demonstrating a reading knowledge of the foreign languages applicable to research in their fields, as determined by their major professors. This requirement must be satisfied by one of the following methods:

- Completing the third semester of an undergraduate language course sequence and earning a grade of B or higher.
- Earning a grade of B or higher in a one-semester language course at UGA specifically designed for graduate students who are attempting to fulfill their language requirements. Such courses include (but are not limited to): SPAN 2500, GRMN 3500, and FREN 2500.
- Receiving a passing grade on a Research Skills Foreign Language Exam. These tests are offered once a semester by Romance Languages, Germanic and Slavic Studies, and other departments.
- Passing the language exam given by a faculty member. Students who elect to satisfy the language requirement in this manner must have the permission of their major professor and the Graduate Coordinator.

Note: On the PhD program of study, fulfillment of the research skills requirement is noted separately under "Research skills requirement." If the research skills requirement is fulfilled by taking undergraduate-level classes (below 6000-level), these classes do not count toward the total number of hours on the program of study.



Dissertation Research and Writing hours (min. 13 hrs.):

RELI 9000, Doctoral Research, min. 3 hrs. on the PhD program of study

RELI 9300, Doctoral Dissertation, min. 10 hrs. on the PhD program of study

Total hours: Min. 35 hrs.

The above program of study for a PhD in Religion adds up to a minimum of 35 hours, *in addition to* the classes that are listed separately: the GradFIRST seminar (GRSC 7001), the pedagogy seminar (RELI 7771, GRSC 7770, or equivalent), and any undergraduate classes (below 6000-level). At least 16 hours on the program of study must be at 8000/9000-level (exclusive of 9000, 9005, and 9300).

Note: With the exception of the GradFIRST seminar, the pedagogy seminar, and any undergraduate classes (below 6000-level), all courses should be listed on the program of study in the order taken. No grade below "C" will be accepted on the program of study. To be eligible to graduate, a student must maintain a 3.0 ("B") average on all courses in the program of study and on all graduate courses taken.

Sample Programs of Study:

Below are three possible sample programs, the first two of which are for the two tracks for the PhD in Religion; these programs presuppose that the students taking them would have already received an MA in Religion or the equivalent. The third sample program is for a student entering the graduate program without an MA in Religion or the equivalent.

Track A: Religion in a Global Society

Note: For each semester, add any individualized requirements, languages, and/or RELI 9000, 9005, 9300 to reach the enrollment hours needed.

Course Number	Course Title	Hours	
<u>1st year, Fall</u>			
GRSC 7001	GradFIRST Seminar	[1]	<i>GradFIRST [listed separately]</i>
RELI 7771	Teaching Religious Studies	[3]	<i>Pedagogy [listed separately]</i>
RELI 8770	Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion	3	<i>Theories &amp; Methods</i>
RELI (ARAB) 6308	Islamic Calligraphic Art	3	<i>Elective</i>
<u>1st year, Spring</u>			
RELI 6303	The Sufi Way	3	<i>Elective</i>
RELI 8100	Religion and Globalization	3	<i>Track</i>
RELI 8700	Problems and Topics in Religion Research	3	<i>8000-level Elective</i>
QUAL 8035	Visual Inquiry	3	<i>8000-level Elective</i>
<u>2nd year, Fall</u>			
RELI 8700	Problems and Topics in Religion Research	3	<i>8000-level Elective</i>
<u>2nd year, Spring</u>			
RELI 8480	Seminar in Islamic Research	3	<i>8000-level Elective</i>
<u>3rd year, Fall</u>			
RELI 9000	Doctoral Research	3	<i>Research</i>

<u>3rd year, Spring</u>			
RELI 9000	Doctoral Research	3	<i>Research</i>
<u>4th year, Fall</u>			
RELI 9300	Doctoral Dissertation	3	<i>Dissertation</i>
<u>4th year, Spring</u>			
RELI 9300	Doctoral Dissertation	3	<i>Dissertation</i>
<u>5th year, Fall</u>			
RELI 9300	Doctoral Dissertation	3	<i>Dissertation</i>
<u>5th year, Spring</u>			
RELI 9300	Doctoral Dissertation	3	<i>Dissertation</i>

#### Track B: Religion in the Americas

Note: For each semester, add any individualized requirements, languages, and/or RELI 9000, 9005, 9300 to reach the enrollment hours needed.

Course Number	Course Title	Hours	
<u>1st year, Fall</u>			
GRSC 7001	GradFIRST Seminar	[1]	<i>GradFIRST [listed separately]</i>
RELI 7771	Teaching Religious Studies	[3]	<i>Pedagogy [listed separately]</i>
RELI 8770	Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion	3	<i>Theories &amp; Methods</i>
RELI 6095	Christianity and Sustainability	3	<i>Elective</i>
<u>1st year, Spring</u>			
RELI (ANTH) 6110	Anthropology and American Religion	3	<i>Elective</i>
RELI 8200	Religion in the Americas	3	<i>Track</i>
RELI 8700	Problems and Topics in Religion Research	3	<i>8000-level Elective</i>
ANTH 8525	Environmental Governance	3	<i>8000-level Elective</i>
<u>2nd year, Fall</u>			
RELI 8700	Problems and Topics in Religion Research	3	<i>8000-level Elective</i>
<u>2nd year, Spring</u>			
RELI 8500	Seminar in the History of Christian Thought	3	<i>8000-level Elective</i>
<u>3rd year, Fall</u>			
RELI 9000	Doctoral Research	3	<i>Research</i>
<u>3rd year, Spring</u>			
RELI 9000	Doctoral Research	3	<i>Research</i>
<u>4th year, Fall</u>			
RELI 9300	Doctoral Dissertation	3	<i>Dissertation</i>
<u>4th year, Spring</u>			
RELI 9300	Doctoral Dissertation	3	<i>Dissertation</i>
<u>5th year, Fall</u>			
RELI 9300	Doctoral Dissertation	3	<i>Dissertation</i>

Students without an MA:

Students entering the graduate program with only a Baccalaureate degree must complete all requirements for the MA degree before they proceed to the PhD.

Required courses, coursework, research skills requirement, and Master’s thesis research and writing hours for all students entering without the MA in Religion or its equivalent (all courses chosen only with the approval of the major professor):

a) Required Courses:

- GRSC 7001 GradFIRST seminar, 1 hr., required for all MA students
- RELI 7771 Teaching Religious Studies, 3 hrs. (or GRSC 7770 or an equivalent UGA pedagogy seminar); only required for MA students on a Teaching Assistantship
- RELI 8770 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion, 3 hrs.

b) Coursework (min. 24 hrs.):

A minimum of 24 hours of coursework (18 hours in a major area, 6 hours in a minor area, determined with the approval of the major professor). At least 12 hours must be taken in 8000-level courses or graduate-only courses (excluding 7000, 7005, and 7300). RELI 8770 may count toward the 24 hours of coursework and toward the 12 hours at 8000-level.

c) Research Skills Requirement:

The MA degree in Religion requires reading knowledge of one foreign language.

d) Master’s Thesis Research and Writing hours (min. 6 hrs.):

- RELI 7000 Master’s Research, min. 3 hrs. on the MA program of study
- RELI7300 Master’s Thesis, min. 3 hrs. on the MA program of study

Note: A student would take RELI 7000 and RELI 7300 only if entering without the MA.

Total hours: A minimum of 30 hours, *in addition to* GRSC 7001, RELI 7771, and any undergraduate classes (below 6000-level).

Note: Upon completion of such a program, which fulfills all requirements for the MA degree (including submitting and defending an MA thesis and receiving the MA degree), students can then proceed to the PhD program.

Below is one possible sample program for a student entering without an MA.

Note: For each semester, add any individualized requirements, languages, and/or RELI 7000, 7005, 7300 to reach the enrollment hours needed.

Course Number	Course Title	Hours
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1st year, Fall

GRSC 7001	GradFIRST Seminar	[1]	<i>GradFIRST [listed separately]</i>
RELI 7771	Teaching Religious Studies	[3]	<i>Pedagogy [listed separately]</i>
RELI 8770	Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion	3	<i>Theories &amp; Methods (8000-level)</i>
RELI (AFAM) 6201	African American Religious History	3	<i>Coursework (6000+)</i>

1st year, Spring

RELI (AFAM) 6202	Southern Religious History	3	<i>Coursework (6000+)</i>
RELI (WMST) 6550	Women in World Religions	3	<i>Coursework (6000+)</i>
HIST (RELI) 6214	Intro to the Religions of the Caribbean	3	<i>Coursework (6000+)</i>
HIST (AFAM) 8005	Colloquium in African American History	3	<i>Coursework (8000-level)</i>

2nd year, Fall

RELI 7000	Master's Research	3	<i>Research</i>
RELI 8700	Problems and Topics in Religion Research	3	<i>Coursework (8000-level)</i>

2nd year, Spring

RELI 7300	Master's Thesis	3	<i>Thesis</i>
RELI 8200	Religion in the Americas	3	<i>Coursework (8000-level)</i>

ENROLLMENT HOURS PER SEMESTER

Copies of the Schedule of Classes for each semester are posted on the Registrar's website:

<https://www.reg.uga.edu/schedule-of-classes>

Registration for the Fall semester begins in April, and registration for the Spring semester begins in November. Prior to registration you should contact your major professor to work out a plan of coursework and hours for the coming semester. Your plan must be approved by your major professor and the Graduate Coordinator before you can be cleared to register for classes. Once you have been cleared, you can log into Athena to register: <https://athena.uga.edu>

Students on an assistantship must at the latest be registered by the end of the drop/add period (the first few days of each semester).

Graduate students on an assistantship that awards a tuition waiver must register for a minimum of 12 graduate hours and a maximum of 18 semester hours each Fall and Spring semester (and, if applicable, at least 9 hours in the Summer semester). Graduate students who are University System of Georgia employees on the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) may register for a maximum of 9 semester hours. All other graduate students can register for 3-18 hours without requesting overload permission.

RELI 9005 is a 3 hour course that can fill hours for graduate students who need hours to meet their requirements. RELI 9005 is not included on the program of study. RELI 9000 and 9300 are dissertation research and writing classes. Students will usually register for these classes under their major professor. When applicable, students can register for 1-12 hours of RELI 9000 and/or 1-12 hours of RELI 9300 per semester.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM ("COMPS"), PROSPECTUS, AND CANDIDACY

The written and oral comprehensive exams ("comps") for PhD students:

At the completion of required coursework, the student must pass comprehensive qualifying written and oral examinations on topics determined by the major professor and the advisory committee in consultation with the student, covering major field studies, comparative studies, and theory. The written examination questions will vary depending on the area of concentration selected. Content of the exam will take into account the student's coursework, research, and special competencies. The student will submit written answers to the comprehensive examination questions to the major professor and advisory committee.

The student, major professor, and committee will then meet for the oral comprehensive exam. The date for the oral comprehensive exam must be formally announced at least two weeks in advance, and this must be done by the Graduate Coordinator who submits the appropriate form to the Graduate School.

Following the oral exam, the Graduate School will send a form to the major professor and each committee member, asking whether they approve the written and oral comprehensive exams. The student must pass both the written and oral exams with no more than one dissenting vote on each exam.

#### Prospectus and prospectus defense:

The student must present to the major professor an acceptable, written dissertation proposal, which the Graduate School terms a dissertation prospectus. The student shall write a complete, detailed proposal of the dissertation which clearly outlines the topic, the methodology to be employed, the proposed chapters of the dissertation, and the significance of the research. The proposal should include a bibliography.

When the major professor certifies that the dissertation prospectus is satisfactory, it must be formally considered by the advisory committee in a meeting with the student. The committee must meet for this formal consideration (i.e., a prospectus defense). The prospectus defense may not take the place of the oral comprehensive examination. For doctoral students, this is a formal requirement of the Graduate School. However, the prospectus defense may follow immediately after the oral comprehensive examination.

Approval of the dissertation prospectus signifies that members of the advisory committee believe that the prospectus proposes a satisfactory research study. Approval of the prospectus requires the agreement of the advisory committee with no more than one dissenting vote as evidenced by their signing an appropriate form, which, together with the approved prospectus, is filed with the Graduate Coordinator.

#### Admission to candidacy:

Once all criteria for admission to candidacy have been met, and after consulting with the major professor and Graduate Coordinator, the student will apply for admission to candidacy. The criteria for candidacy are set by the Graduate School and can be found at:

<https://policy.uga.edu/policies/#/programs/Hycl4UoKa>. The form requesting admission to candidacy can be accessed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

## RESEARCHING AND WRITING THE DISSERTATION

When researching and writing the PhD dissertation, students typically register for research and writing hours with their major professor, i.e. RELI 9000 Doctoral Research and RELI 9300 Doctoral Dissertation. The dissertation research is developed under the direction of the major professor, but other members of the advisory committee can be consulted when relevant. As the student completes drafts of each

dissertation chapter, the drafts should be sent to the major professor and relevant committee members for feedback. The student can then revise each chapter based on the feedback.

Note that the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in theses and dissertations is considered unauthorized assistance per UGA's Academic Code of Honesty and is prohibited unless specifically authorized by members of the student's advisory committee in writing.

#### FINAL SEMESTER

The final semester brings a series of deadlines set by the Graduate School, which can be viewed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/important-dates-deadlines>. It is the student's responsibility to meet each deadline; please do not rely on anyone to remind you. If you have applied for graduation and later find you will not be able to meet one of the deadlines, you must notify the Graduate School prior to the deadline by contacting [gradinfo@uga.edu](mailto:gradinfo@uga.edu) or your file may be placed on inactive status.

You must be registered for a minimum of 3 graduate hours in your final semester.

##### Application for graduation:

At the very start of your final semester, you must submit an application for graduation. The form for the application for graduation can be accessed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

##### Graduation commencement information:

You will also fill out and submit a form containing information for the doctoral graduation commencement ceremony. This form can also be accessed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

#### DISSERTATION DEFENSE, FORMAT CHECK, AND FINAL APPROVAL

##### Dissertation defense:

After consulting with the major professor, the student will send a complete copy of the dissertation to the major professor and committee. Note that even if the dissertation in development has been given to the readers on a chapter by chapter basis, a complete copy of the dissertation for defense must still be presented to the committee.

The complete copy must be given to the entire committee at least one month prior to the oral defense.

The committee must give assent to move forward with the oral dissertation defense. If they assent, the student and major professor can schedule a date for the dissertation defense. The date for the dissertation defense must be formally announced at least two weeks in advance, and this must be done by the Graduate Coordinator who submits the appropriate form to the Graduate School. The date for the defense must be at least two weeks prior to the Graduate School's dissertation submission deadline.

##### Dissertation format check:

The Graduate School requires that your dissertation follow a certain format and style guide. The Graduate School Style Guide can be obtained at the Graduate School website:

<https://grad.uga.edu/development/academic/theses-dissertation-overview>

You must submit a complete copy of your formatted dissertation for a format check on ProQuest before

the deadline set by the Graduate School. This can be done prior to the defense. Submit by clicking on the link that says “ETD [electronic thesis/dissertation] Format Check Submission” at: <https://grad.uga.edu/development/academic/theses-dissertation-overview>. They will alert you of any formatting errors that you will need to fix prior to turning in the final copy.

#### Dissertation approval:

Following the dissertation defense, you will complete all corrections to your dissertation as required by your major professor and committee. The corrections you make must then be approved by your major professor and committee.

Once the corrections have been approved, you will submit the two final approval forms: the Approval Form for Doctoral Dissertation and Final Oral Examination, and the Electronic Thesis/Dissertation (ETD) Submission Approval Form. These two forms can be accessed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

You can then submit your final approved dissertation. You submit the final dissertation to ProQuest by clicking on the link that says “ETD [electronic thesis/dissertation] Final Submission” at: <https://grad.uga.edu/development/academic/theses-dissertation-overview>

Please print and bind a copy of your final dissertation for the Religion Department. You can have it printed and bound at: <https://tate.uga.edu/print-and-copy>

### PHD TIME LIMIT

*For students who enter the program from Fall 2024 onward:* Doctoral students must complete all requirements for the doctoral degree and the degree must be awarded within eight years after initial enrollment in the program. The student’s time-to-degree clock starts with the first course approved for inclusion in their doctoral Program of Study, or the date of matriculation into the program, whichever occurred earlier.

*For students who entered the program prior to Fall 2024:* All requirements for the degree, except the dissertation and dissertation defense, must be completed within a period of six years. This time requirement dates from the first registration for graduate courses on a student’s program of study. A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to complete all degree requirements within five years after passing the comprehensive examination, and being admitted to candidacy, will be required to take the comprehensive examinations again and be admitted to candidacy a second time.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence provides a mechanism for students experiencing unusual circumstances to be exempt temporarily from the graduate continuous enrollment policy. A leave of absence requires approval of the Graduate Coordinator and the Dean of the Graduate School. A leave of absence will be granted only for good cause, such as: serious medical and health-related issues; major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery therefrom, adoption or fostering of a child, childcare, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study.

An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of 3 credit hours for each

semester for which the leave of absence is granted. During a leave of absence, students may not use UGA facilities, resources, or services designed or intended only for enrolled students; receive a graduate assistantship, fellowship, or financial aid from UGA; or take any UGA courses related to their program of study. The amount of time approved for leave of absence will not count toward time limits governing a graduate degree.

A student may apply for a leave of absence before or during any semester in which they are not registered for courses. The form to request a leave of absence can be accessed at <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>. The form must be received by the Graduate School on or before the last day of classes for the semester for which it is requested. A leave of absence will not be granted retroactively after the end of a semester.



## 4. RESOURCES

The best guide to graduate student resources is the “Resources Digest” the Graduate School sends via email to all graduate students every month. The Graduate School offers comprehensive resources for graduate students at UGA in the areas of academic skills development, professional and career path preparation, personal well-being, and funding opportunities. The digest includes links to these resources as well as resources across campus, timely information about upcoming workshops, and any application deadlines. In addition, the Graduate School provides an overview on its website:

<https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/>

Here are quick links to the Graduate School’s pages for forms and deadlines:

Forms: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

Deadlines: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/important-dates-deadlines>

You may also wish to consult these and other units for specific types of support:

Bursar’s Office “Quick Links” (help with student accounts; tuition and fees; payments; cost calculator):

[https://busfin.uga.edu/bursar/bursar\\_quick\\_links/](https://busfin.uga.edu/bursar/bursar_quick_links/)

EITS / Information Technology (help with UGA MyID; UGAMail):

<https://eits.uga.edu> (click on “Help Desk” in the upper right corner)

Office of Global Engagement (help with visas; passports):

<https://globalengagement.uga.edu/>

Schedule of classes for each semester:

<https://www.reg.uga.edu/schedule-of-classes>

Athena (registering for classes):

<https://athena.uga.edu>

Center for Teaching and Learning - Graduate Student Services:

<https://wwwctl.uga.edu/grad-student/>

Office of Instruction - Student Resources:

<https://instruction.uga.edu/resources/student/>

Help with eLC:

<https://help.elc.uga.edu/>

UGA Libraries - Services for Graduate Students:

<https://www.libs.uga.edu/graduates>

Writing Center:

<https://www.english.uga.edu/jill-and-marvin-willis-center-writing>

Career Center - Services for Graduate Students:

[https://career.uga.edu/graduate\\_students](https://career.uga.edu/graduate_students)

Mentor Program:

<https://mentor.uga.edu/>

Professional photo booth:

[https://career.uga.edu/professional\\_photo\\_booth](https://career.uga.edu/professional_photo_booth)

Internship consultations with Dr Christine Lasek-White:  
<https://www.franklin.uga.edu/career-resources-humanities-majors>

Health Center:

<https://healthcenter.uga.edu/>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP):

<https://healthpromotion.uga.edu/rsvp/>

Love and Money Center:

<https://www.fcs.uga.edu/loveandmoneycenter>

Well-Being Resources:

<https://well-being.uga.edu/>

## APPENDIX A

### NON-DISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The University of Georgia (the “University”) is committed to maintaining a fair and respectful environment for living, work, and study. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, University System of Georgia (“USG”) policy, and University policy, the University prohibits harassment of or discrimination against any person because of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status by any member of the University Community (as defined below) on campus, in connection with a University program or activity, or in a manner that creates a hostile environment for any member of the University Community. Incidents of harassment and discrimination will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or expulsion from the University.

Please read and familiarize yourself with this policy, which can be found on the Equal Opportunity Office (EOO) website: [https://eoo.uga.edu/civil\\_rights\\_NDAH/ndah-policy/](https://eoo.uga.edu/civil_rights_NDAH/ndah-policy/)

## APPENDIX B

### ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

UGA seeks to promote and ensure academic honesty and personal integrity among students and the university community. Academic honesty is vital to the very fabric and integrity of the university. Academic honesty is defined as completing all academic work without cheating, lying, stealing, or receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information not appropriately authorized or attributed. All syllabi must include the statement:

“UGA Student Honor Code: ‘I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.’ A Culture of Honesty, the University’s policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at [honesty.uga.edu](http://honesty.uga.edu).”

An instructor has the responsibility to report possible violations of the Academic Honesty policy. When an instructor believes an incident of academic dishonesty has occurred, the instructor should report the allegation to the Office of Academic Honesty by going to their website (<https://honesty.uga.edu/resources/faculty/>) and clicking on “Report Violation.” The office will notify the accused student. Instructors should not discuss the report with the student(s) until a facilitator is available. A meeting will be scheduled with a facilitator to provide an educational, fair, and focused discussion of what may have occurred. The only parties present are the instructor(s), student(s), and facilitator.

Please read and familiarize yourself with this policy, including “Tips to Avoid Academic Dishonesty” in your classes, which can be found on the Office of Academic Honesty website: <https://honesty.uga.edu/resources/faculty/>

## APPENDIX C

### FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and University policy provide important safeguards for maintaining the confidentiality of student records.

As a TA, you are responsible for protecting the confidentiality of students' records. For example, you should not discuss a student's academic work with persons other than faculty or TAs who are part of the teaching team for that class. Do not display students' grades in a public manner and do not leave them in plain view in an open mailbox. Graded papers or tests should not be left unattended in a public area, nor should students sort through graded papers or tests to retrieve their own. The list of students enrolled in the class should be handled in a confidential manner and not disclosed to third parties. Parents and significant others do not have a right to information contained in a student's education record, nor do employers have this right. Specifically, do not provide anyone with a student's class schedule. If someone indicates it is necessary to contact a student due to an emergency, refer them to Student Care and Outreach for assistance at 706-542-7774. Recordings of class sessions that show one or more students may be made available to students enrolled in the class during that semester, but these recordings should not be made available to anyone outside the class nor to any classes in subsequent semesters.

Please read and familiarize yourself with this policy, which can be found on the Registrar's website: <https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa/>