

Religious Studies Honors Program

Program Requirements & Application

Application Deadline: Friday, September 1, 2017

It is strongly recommended that students submit applications well before this date to the Program Coordinator, Cyndi Goodson, at cyndigoodson@austin.utexas.edu

Dear RS Student:

The Religious Studies Honors Program provides the opportunity for you to conduct in-depth research in a particular topic to enhance your educational goals. The thesis should grow from your personal and academic interests and will be developed under the supervision of a Faculty Advisor with expertise in your area of interest. The Honors Thesis sequence involves two courses, R S 679HA and R S 679HB, taken consecutively. The majority of your research is completed during the R S 679HA portion of the sequence, at the end of which your advisor will assign a grade. The second half, R S 679HB, will be spent writing your thesis, generally 50-60 pages (plus bibliography).

The successful completion of an Honors Thesis depends upon a good working relationship between you and your Faculty Advisor. You are expected to take initiative in communicating with your Advisor and scheduling meetings throughout the year. You and your Advisor should select the Second Reader as early as possible, and no later than the 12th class day of the semester you are enrolled in R S 679HB. A completed and bound copy of the approved thesis must be submitted to the department by the *last class day* of the semester in which the thesis was written.

Although the Faculty Advisor will provide the main source of guidance on the project, information regarding procedures for the honors thesis is available in the RS Thesis Manual or from the Program Coordinator.

Admission Requirements

- UT GPA of at least 3.0; Religious Studies GPA of at least 3.5; upper-division standing.
- Strong research, writing skills—completion of 1-2 writing flag courses with a grade of B+ or higher preferred.

Special Circumstances

- A Religious Studies thesis will satisfy the Plan II thesis requirement. Plan II/RS majors pursuing this option will receive Special Honors in Religious Studies (instead of Plan II).
- It is possible to register for 679HA in the spring semester and 679HB in the fall.

Requirements for Graduating with Honors

- R S 679HA with a grade of at least “B.” R S 679HB with a grade of “A.”
- Maintain a UT GPA of at least 3.0 and a GPA in Religious Studies of at least 3.5.

Program Requirements

- Thirty-three hours of Religious Studies coursework
- Religious Studies 679HA, 679HB: Honors Tutorial Course (two semesters)
- Honors Thesis

The two readers will assess the thesis with the following criteria in mind: **Quality of argument, breadth of research in primary and secondary sources, quality of writing and organization, and conformity with current rules of proper academic conduct.**

Suggested Timeline

R S 679HA

- **12th Class Day:** Submit research prospectus and draft of the project bibliography to Faculty Advisor.
- **Mid-semester Deadline:** Complete initial research/reading phase. Meet with Faculty Advisor to discuss progress.
- **Last Class Day:** Submit a detailed outline and a draft of the introduction or prospectus to the Faculty Advisor.

R S 679HB

- **12th Class Day:** Complete draft of first chapter. Select Second Reader and inform Honors Advisor.
- **Mid-Semester Deadline Day:** Submit completed first draft of thesis to the Faculty Advisor for comments. Advisor will return draft with comments within two weeks.
- **12th Week of Classes:** Submit a final draft to both readers. This will allow two weeks for final corrections, revisions, binding, and collecting signatures on final copy.
- **Last Class Day:** Submit bound, signed copy of thesis to the Religious Studies Department office.

Contract Schedule

In consultation with your Faculty Advisor, you should develop a rough schedule with deadlines for the following materials. Use the Suggested Timeline as a guide. You are not expected to submit everything in this list.

- Project Outline
- Annotated Bibliography
- Prospectus
- Literature Review
- Rough Draft
- Final Copy to Advisor
- Bound Copy to Dept. Office

To the Faculty Advisor

NOTE ON GRADING: While it is common practice at the University for Faculty Advisors to submit a grade of incomplete for the first semester and wait until final production of the thesis in the spring to assign grades for both semesters, we encourage faculty to give students a letter grade at the end of the fall semester, when possible. It may be necessary in this case for students to have completed a substantial piece of writing—such as a prospectus, draft of an introduction, or detailed outline—in the fall in order to receive a grade. This is suggested practice by the Department of Religious Studies, in order to help students stay focused and on track during the fall semester. However, decisions regarding grading are left entirely to the discretion of the Faculty Advisor.

Religious Studies Honors Application

Please submit the following to Burdine 531 no later than Friday, September 1, 2017.

Name:	EID:
E-mail:	Total hours completed:
Primary Major & Minor:	Cumulative UT GPA:
Additional Major(s):	UT Religious Studies Hours:
Expected graduation date (semester & year):	UT Religious Studies GPA:
<p>On a separate sheet, submit a personal statement (1-2 pages) discussing your academic background and interests, as well as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project title • Abstract: no more than one paragraph • Method of evaluation: In conjunction with your Faculty Advisor, determine how your work will be assessed and graded. 	
Name of Supervising Professor:	
Signature of Supervising Professor:	Date:
Signature of RS Honors Advisor:	Date:
Signature of Student:	Date: