

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
BROWN UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2008-2009

The primary purpose of this Handbook is to provide information geared to the needs of graduate students at all levels in Religious Studies. It is intended to answer many basic questions and help graduate students progress as quickly and efficiently as possible towards the completion of the degree. It's not intended as a replacement either for consulting official University documents, especially the departmental and Graduate School Websites (from which considerable portions of this Handbook are distilled), or for consulting with faculty, fellow students, and various officials of the Graduate School, all of which graduate students should do regularly. This Handbook is revised periodically, and we welcome suggestions for its improvement.

GRADUATE STUDY IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES: AN OVERVIEW

The Graduate Program in Religious Studies at Brown is administered by a faculty sub-committee, the Graduate Committee, which ordinarily consists of three faculty members appointed by the department Chair, one of whom is the departmental Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), and who chairs the Committee.

DEGREE PROGRAMS

Graduate study in Religious Studies at Brown is designed primarily to train students for careers in teaching and research in colleges, universities and related institutions. A full description of the graduate areas currently offered is found below. Ordinarily, graduate students are admitted only to do doctoral work. Students already accepted into the Ph.D. program who do not have an M.A. in religion from another institution may obtain the M.A. degree from Brown by petitioning the Graduate School after one year of successful course work.

MASTER OF ARTS

Very occasionally, under unusual circumstances, the department may accept a student for terminal M.A. study. Financial aid is not available for M.A. students. Since this degree provides a more general overview within the field of Religious Studies than the Ph.D., students may propose various programs of study that fit their academic preparation and the resources of the faculty in the Department and related areas. The specific content of the degree will thus depend to a large extent on the student's interests and the faculty available in any given year.

The terminal M.A. in Religious Studies requires the completion of an approved program of eight semester courses and a thesis. The candidate must take RELS 2000, *Theory of Religion*, or an equivalent course, and must pass a language examination in either French or German, as well as demonstrate competence in other languages necessary for the particular program of study.

The M.A. may be completed in one academic year, in one academic year plus the summer, or in two academic years. A Master's thesis is not a dissertation and is normally less than 100 pages long. It may be based on a course paper, or on separate research under the guidance of a faculty member.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Brown University maintains three general requirements for the Ph.D. discussed in more detail below: residence, advancement to candidacy, and the dissertation. Advancement to candidacy occurs upon the recommendation of the Department after students have completed all required course work, including RELS 2000, and all language, qualifying, and preliminary exams. Each of the Religious Studies doctoral areas has its own requirements, as described below. However, all Religious Studies graduate students must complete RELS 2000, modern language requirements (ordinarily French and German), and at least two semesters as a Teaching Assistant before being allowed to take their preliminary exams.

GENERAL PH.D. REQUIREMENTS (SEE ALSO AREA-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS BELOW)

COURSEWORK

All students are required to complete the equivalent of three years (six semesters) of full-time study beyond the baccalaureate degree (i.e., twenty-four tuition units). Up to one full year of graduate work done in residence at other institutions and not used in fulfillment of the requirements for the Ph.D. elsewhere may, on the recommendation of the department faculty and with the approval of the registrar, be counted in fulfillment of this requirement.

Students will normally develop their course of study in consultation with the faculty in their area and as necessary, the DGS (see the section below on “Advising”). All students are required to take RELS 2000, a seminar on *Theory of Religion* as early as possible in their course of study (it is only offered some years). We encourage students to work and develop professional relationships with faculty outside of the Department who focus in cognate areas. A student in Ancient Judaism, for example, might take courses in the archaeology of the Near East or literary theory. Students in Religion and Critical Thought often take courses in the Philosophy and Political Science departments, and those in Early Christianity often work in Classics and Egyptology.

After completion of formal course requirements, students in most areas are expected to enroll in one designated seminar each semester until the completion of their Preliminary Examinations. Students in other areas are encouraged to do the same.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

All students are required to demonstrate competency in two modern foreign languages, typically French and German. This requirement can be fulfilled through either appropriate coursework, a translation project, or examination: for specifics, students should consult the program area coordinator. Ancient Judaism, Early Christianity and Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean also require ancient languages (see below): students in Asian religions also have various language requirements. Students, of course, are also expected to acquire any additional languages that they may require for their research.

Students must complete all language requirements prior to taking their Preliminary Examinations.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

Due, in part, to differing professional expectations in each of these areas, the format and expectations for exams differ substantially from one area to another. Generally, however, each area has designed its exams to help students acquire specialized expertise as well as disciplinary breadth. All of the areas require students to be involved actively in developing their own reading lists. While some exams in some areas are normally taken in the first and second year of residence, we expect most students to complete all their exams by the end of the third year, with occasional exceptions.

At the discretion of the Advisory Faculty, students may be required to revise portions of their exams or given an opportunity to rewrite or retake an exam. If, in the end, the Advisory Faculty determines that the student has not passed the Preliminary Exams, the student will be asked to leave the program and the

Advisory Faculty will decide whether the student will be awarded a terminal M.A., contingent on the quality of the student's course work and examinations.

DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS

Students who have successfully passed their examinations must then present a dissertation prospectus to the Religious Studies faculty for their discussion and approval. The prospectus should present the proposed dissertation topic, explain its scholarly context and justification, describe the methodologies to be employed, put forth a plan for procedure (e.g., a tentative, annotated table of contents) and a select bibliography. The ideal typical length of the prospectus is ten to twenty pages, including a bibliography.

The student works closely with his or her advisor on the prospectus. When the advisor and other related faculty deem the prospectus to be sufficiently clear and substantive, it is submitted to the DGS, who distributes it to the departmental faculty, and arranges the prospectus presentation. The student's dissertation committee will be determined upon consultation between the student and faculty, and should be informally arranged prior to the prospectus meeting with the help of the student's advisor and the DGS.

The prospectus presentation ordinarily takes place 2-4 weeks after submission of the prospectus. Unlike the final oral defense of the dissertation, this is a closed meeting (ordinarily about 90 minutes), where the RS faculty (and invited faculty guests) and the student discuss the proposed dissertation. This is a working session whose purpose is for the faculty to have constructive input early enough to avoid major problems later, and to assist in clarifying the dissertation process.

Ordinarily, the DGS presides. The student begins with a brief statement (10 minutes), describing the genesis of the project and how it relates to the work the student has done in the department. After appropriate faculty questioning and discussion, the student leaves the room briefly while faculty assess the dissertation, raise any further issues, and clarify agreements about the dissertation committee. The student then returns and is informed of the faculty's decision regarding both the prospectus and the committee, and given any further points of clarification, advice, or procedure. If the faculty approves these, the student is now formally advanced to candidacy.

DISSERTATION

Students ordinarily devote at least two years to the dissertation, although occasionally less. Students should be thinking about possible dissertation topics from the beginning of their program. Topics or areas for dissertation research often develop out of work in seminars and courses, so it's always best to choose course papers with care. Once a student has identified a topic or promising area, the faculty member whose specializations most closely match that topic will be the natural choice for first reader or advisor. The student should work with this person (and the other faculty members in the program) to develop a prospectus and to propose second and third readers for the dissertation.

Dissertations regularly set one's scholarly program for years to come, and contribute substantially to one's professional identity, including one's perceived suitability for various teaching positions. Students should discuss these aspects of prospective thesis topics early on with their advisors.

Different institutions (and departments) have different procedures for dissertation advising. In Religious Studies, it is often the case that only the advisor reads first drafts, and that second and third (and fourth, if applicable) readers only see and critique the project at a later stage. These practices, however, are flexible,

and students are encouraged to devise a process with their advisors that provides the most constructive guidance to the student, and produces the strongest possible result. Students should keep in mind, though, that reading and critiquing dissertations is highly time-consuming for faculty. Being mindful of faculty schedules and workload makes it more likely that students will receive productive feedback and complete their dissertation in a timely manner. Students should always let faculty members know well in advance when to expect drafts, and should have reasonable expectations about faculty turn-around time.

The Department of Religious Studies requires that the dissertation, demonstrating original research and advanced scholarship, be defended in an oral examination before the faculty. When the advisor, having consulted with the whole committee, judges that a dissertation is ready for defense, she or he will, in consultation with the DGS, schedule a date, time and place for the defense. This occasion brings the student together with the readers and other pertinent faculty, and is usually open to the larger university community, including graduate students.

The format of the defense, which is technically an oral examination, is similar to that of the prospectus meeting. Normally, the DGS conducts a brief closed meeting with the faculty (without the candidate or any guests) to discuss the format of the defense, and to consider any last minute issues that may have arisen. The candidate and any others attending then return. After the candidate provides an overview of the dissertation, faculty ask critical questions, normally for about an hour and a half. The faculty then meet in closed session to evaluate the student's work. When the faculty formally accept the dissertation, including approval of the defense, the student has successfully completed the doctorate degree.

Detailed instructions for the preparation and submission of the dissertation and abstract, as information on filing fees, microfilm publication and copyright, are available on the Graduate School Website. Students should familiarize themselves with these requirements very early on in the writing process. Students must allow for a few days beyond the defense before formal submission, in order to incorporate any final changes or corrections from the defense before binding: several weeks are preferable.

DEADLINES

The Graduate School expects that all candidates will successfully submit and defend the dissertation within five years of achieving candidacy. In the past, the Graduate School has allowed students to apply for a one-year extension of this deadline, with the consent of the DGS. Whether this policy will continue is unclear: the forms for such extensions are no longer offered on the Graduate School website. Students wishing to apply for such an extension must in any case write a letter to the DGS explaining the delay.

RECEIVING THE ACTUAL DEGREE

Ph.D. degrees are awarded only at Spring commencement, regardless of when the actual defense takes place. To receive a Ph.D. degree at commencement, students must submit the dissertation by the first business day in May, although an extension to 15 May is possible when a request is submitted to the Graduate School. Students who anticipate completing the dissertation within one month of the semester following that in which they are presently registered, may request a one month extension that allows them to complete their work without registering (and paying) for the following semester.

SUMMARY: OVERVIEW OF THE PH.D. PROGRAM

Since TA assignments are no longer coupled to student funding, the exact number and timing of semesters when a student will work for the department or the university, as a Teaching Assistant, Teaching Fellow, Research Assistant or Proctor will depend on institutional needs, and on the student's program. Since most Brown Ph.D. graduate students in Religious Studies come with a prior masters degree, an ideal sequence through the program might look as follows:

YEAR 1

Fall: 4 courses
Spring: 4 courses
Summer: Summer study: language work, archaeological or other field training, travel

YEAR 2

Fall: 3 courses; departmental assignment (TA, TF, RA, proctorship)
Spring: 3 courses; departmental assignment (TA, TF, RA, proctorship);
begin developing preliminary exam proposal
Summer: Summer study: language work (completed if possible), archaeological or other field
training: finish preliminary exam proposal
EC students should have finished Qualifying Examinations

YEAR 3

Fall: 1 course; departmental assignment (TA, TF, RA, proctorship); preliminary exams
(half complete by January); begin work on dissertation prospectus
Spring: 1 course; departmental assignment (TA, TF, RA, proctorship); complete preliminary
exams
Summer: Complete dissertation prospectus

YEAR 4

Fall: Dissertation prospectus conference (early fall); then work on dissertation
Spring: Work on dissertation
Summer: Work on dissertation

YEAR 5

Fall: Work on dissertation; apply for jobs
Spring: Complete and defend dissertation

ADVISING

Each Ph.D. area has its own core faculty. One faculty member is usually designated as the program coordinator/advisor (designated with an asterisk below). For 2008-09, the core faculty members are:

Ancient Judaism (AJ): Kraemer, Olyan*, Satlow

Asian Religions (AR): Roth, Sawada, Wulff [coordinator not designated for 2008-2009]

Early Christianity (EC): Harvey, Khalek, Kraemer*, Stowers

Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean (RAM): (Harvey, Khalek, Kraemer*, Olyan, Satlow, Stowers)

Religion and Critical Thought (RCT): Bagger, Cladis*, Lewis

Religion, Culture and Comparison (RCC): All RS faculty participate as appropriate in this program. Professor Stowers is currently the coordinator.

The program coordinator/advisor generally serves as the student's primary advisor through the Preliminary Examination phase. Graduate students, though, are expected to take primary responsibility for their schedules. This means that while students must carefully consult with the members of the core faculty in their area, the faculty expect students to develop and be able to justify their own schedule. Typically, students still "in course" should develop a preliminary schedule and discuss it with each of the core faculty before meeting with the program coordinator/advisor.

Toward the end of the exam process students will normally begin thinking about their dissertation proposal and the best person to advise the dissertation. Again, the program coordinator/advisor is the primary contact person to guide you through this decision.

Ultimately, the authority for appointing the dissertation director and the members of the dissertation committee rests with the faculty of the Department. The dissertation committee is officially constituted after the conference on the dissertation prospectus, although its general membership is usually agreed upon prior to the defense. The dissertation advisor will then serve as the student's primary advisor through completion. Most graduate students continue to consult with other faculty in their area for advice about various aspects of their professional program.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS AND EVALUATION

The Department of Religious Studies expects that all Ph.D. students will make satisfactory and timely progress through the graduate program, and all funding is contingent on such progress. Students whose work is ultimately insufficient by the faculty may be terminated from the program, although such a determination is unusual and only reached after considerable consultation. In some cases, students terminated from Ph.D. study may be eligible to receive a terminal M.A. Students whose work is otherwise acceptable but whose progress is not sufficiently timely may have their funding withdrawn, or may be terminated from the program.

Graduate students are evaluated annually in writing. Students in those areas that conduct self-evaluations will usually be asked in the late spring to prepare a short (2-3 page) self-evaluation in which they reflect on

their accomplishments during the prior year and their future plans (e.g., remaining educational lacunae that they feel might still exist, and how they plan to address them). After classes have ended each area's faculty will discuss the progress of each student. The program coordinator will then write the student evaluation summarizing these discussions. The evaluation is normally sent to the student by e-mail and hard copy. Hard copies (along with the annual self-evaluation) are kept in the student's departmental file.

These evaluations are internal documents used only within the department. They are intended to provide a formal feedback mechanism that conveys the expectations of the faculty for the coming year. Should a student fall behind or in another way not fulfill the faculty's expectations, the letter will specify precisely what the student needs to do, and in what time-frame, to maintain a status of "satisfactory progress" in the program. Students are encouraged to discuss any issues raised in these evaluations with the appropriate faculty, and if necessary, with the DGS as well.

SPECIFIC AREA PROGRAMS

Each of the specific area programs has its own particular requirements and examination structures and formats, which are detailed below. The requirements for the dissertation prospectus, dissertation, and final public oral examination (dissertation defense) are generally the same for all Ph.D. students in Religious Studies, and are described above. In addition, all students are required to take RELS 2000, and to demonstrate competence in two modern scholarly languages, as described above. Some programs have additional requirements or policies regarding these languages, as noted below.

ANCIENT JUDAISM

DESCRIPTION

The Ph.D. program in Ancient Judaism focuses on the history, literature, religion, and culture of ancient Israelites and Jews from the late second millennium BCE through the end of Late Antiquity. In addition to encouraging students to work across artificially constructed chronological and cultural categories (e.g., the biblical, Hellenistic, Roman or rabbinic periods), the program emphasizes the importance and relevance of theoretical and comparative/contextual issues to the study of antiquity. Our goal is to produce superior scholars and teachers who are able to compete in the academic job market at the highest levels.

COURSE WORK AT BROWN

Students in the graduate program are encouraged to pursue their own, individualized course of study. In addition to required seminars, language courses and audits, students may audit or take for credit other courses useful to their training. It is expected that students in residence will enroll in the intermediate and advanced level seminars and in courses in required languages offered in the program in a given year. In addition, students will take at least two courses on the religion, society or history of Mediterranean Antiquity and RELS 2000, the graduate level seminar on theory and theorizing of religion. Students will also be asked to audit a selection of undergraduate courses that they may be asked to teach during their professional careers (e.g., The Hebrew Bible and the History of Ancient Israel; Introduction to Rabbinic Literature; The Beginnings of Judaism).

STUDY IN ISRAEL OR ELSEWHERE (SUMMER, SEMESTER, YEAR)

Partial support from the Program in Judaic Studies for summer study in Israel or elsewhere may on occasion be made available to students who wish to pursue such study. Students with insufficient knowledge of Hebrew may be asked to spend the summer after the first year in residence studying in Israel or at an American institution offering summer language courses. Advanced students who have completed their coursework at Brown are encouraged to consider spending some time at an Israeli university pursuing research interests and/or improving language skills.

CERTIFICATION IN THE REQUIRED SCHOLARLY LANGUAGES

Students in Ancient Judaism are required to demonstrate proficiency in ancient Hebrew, and demonstrate competence in Aramaic, ancient Greek, Latin, modern Hebrew, French and German.

YEARLY EXAMINATION IN ANCIENT HEBREW

Upon arrival, every incoming student will be asked to take an examination in ancient Hebrew (biblical, Qumran, rabbinic) during which dictionaries may be used. The purpose of this initial exam is diagnostic, helping both the faculty and student to determine areas that need additional attention. The exam will be given annually, and sections passed in one year need not be repeated in subsequent years. All sections must be passed by the beginning of the fourth year of residence. Students will be provided in advance with a list of texts from which the examination will be drawn.

ADDITIONAL ANCIENT LANGUAGES

The program requires every student to complete a minimum of two years of college level ancient Greek and one year of college level Latin, or to demonstrate equivalent knowledge through examination. A student completing courses in Greek and Latin at Brown may be excused from examination if the program faculty is satisfied with the student's ability to work in these languages. The Aramaic requirement will be satisfied through successful completion of the Aramaic course sequence offered by the program every third year.

MODERN LANGUAGES

The faculty administer examinations in French, German and modern Hebrew throughout the year as necessary. Each of these examinations should be completed successfully by the end of the summer after the sixth semester in residence. Previous course work or examination elsewhere may, in certain cases, allow the faculty to excuse a student from one or more of these examinations. Students wishing to be examined in one or more of these languages should make arrangements well in advance with the AJ advisor.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

The preliminary examination has two segments.

SEGMENT 1

This is a Breadth Examination on history and sources from Ancient Israel to the end of Late Antiquity, taken no later than the end of the seventh semester of residence. A reading list will be provided to each student in advance of the exam. The exam will have a traditional "sit down" format, and be taken on campus.

SEGMENT 2

This is a Topics Examination, taken no later than the end of the eighth semester of residence, over three days. Students prepare on eight topics, subject to faculty approval. They are then tested on three of these, over three days (one per day). Each exam is a take home to be submitted no later than 24 hours after the exam begins. An oral defense follows the completion of the three examinations. Topics for this exam might include: the history of Israel in the monarchic period; responses to the crisis of exile; the formation of the Pentateuch; sex and gender in ancient Israel; temple and community in the restoration era; sectarianism and diversity in Judaism of the period 515 BCE-70 CE; biblical exegesis of the period 515 BCE-70 CE; the Maccabees and revolutionary politics; the Mishnah and its literary affiliations; the Jews and the Roman state; the Judaism of art, archeology, and inscriptions; the relationship of "Judaism" to "Christianity". Students are encouraged to suggest additional/alternative topics. A spread of topics over time and subject is expected of all students.

COGNATE REQUIREMENT

The goal of the cognate requirement is to provide an opportunity for the student to master some aspect(s) of an area outside the study of Israelites, Jews and Judaism in Antiquity in order to gain a broader perspective. The cognate requirement should be completed before the end of the sixth semester of residence, but no later than the end of the eighth semester of residence. In order to meet the requirement, each student will write a research paper in an ancillary or specialized subject of the student's choice pending approval from the core faculty. The paper may be the result of an independent study, or it may be a paper written as a requirement for a course. Possible topics for the cognate requirement include early Jesus traditions; gender theory; ritual theory; law in ancient West Asia; Roman history and society of the second century CE; Hellenistic poetry; the Stoics. The subject of this paper should not impinge directly on any of the topics covered in segment 2 of the preliminary examination.

ASIAN RELIGIONS

As of 2008-2009, plans for a formalized Ph.D. program in Asian religions are under active departmental discussion. As of yet, no formal requirements for such study have been established. Presently, students wishing to specialize in Asian religions do so through either the RCT program, or the RCC program.

EARLY CHRISTIANITY

DESCRIPTION

The Ph.D. program in Early Christianity trains scholars in the emergence and development of Christianity from its beginnings in first-century C.E. Galilee through the end of Late Antiquity (6th century). Students focus either on Christianity in the early Roman Empire or Christianity in Late Antiquity, with the other area as their minor. The program in early Christianity emphasizes the importance and relevance of theoretical, comparative and contextual work for the study of antiquity.

COURSE WORK

The EC faculty encourage students in the graduate program to pursue their own, individualized course of study. In addition to required EC seminars, students may take (for credit or audit) other courses useful to their training, both in Religious Studies and in other departments. All EC graduate students are urged to take the required RELS 2000, Theory of Religion, as early as possible (in some years, the course is not offered).

EC students who have completed their formal course work are still expected to enroll in at least two graduate seminars offered each year by the Early Christianity program until they have passed the preliminary examinations.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

EC students are required, at a minimum, to demonstrate proficiency in Greek and Latin, and competency in two modern languages, ordinarily French and German. Brown offers various opportunities to study other ancient languages relevant to early Christianity, including ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac and Coptic.

Language study may also be done elsewhere during the summer, or during the academic year through the Ivy League Exchange.

ANCIENT LANGUAGES

GREEK AND LATIN

Entering students usually take diagnostic exams in both Greek and Latin administered by the EC faculty just before enrolling in the first semester of study. The exams are usually given on two successive mornings, for three hours. The Greek exam entails translating one passage each of classical, *koine*, and patristic Greek. The Latin exam entails translating one passage each of classical Latin, the Vulgate, and patristic Latin. A dictionary may be used for both of the above examinations.

Students whose performance is sufficient on these exams satisfy the proficiency requirement, and need take no additional courses in Greek and Latin, although they are welcome to do so. Most students do not meet this standard when they enter Brown, and consequently take additional courses before sitting for the examination or examinations again the following year. Sometimes, the faculty will determine that a specific program of additional coursework will suffice, provided the student earns a grade of B or higher (or its equivalent) in the course or courses specified.

ADDITIONAL ANCIENT LANGUAGES (SYRIAC, COPTIC, HEBREW, ARAMAIC, ETC).

Depending on their areas of interest, EC students may need to acquire competence in additional ancient languages. Syriac, Coptic, Hebrew and Aramaic may all be studied at the graduate level at Brown: additional languages may be studied at Harvard and elsewhere, as necessary. There are no formal examination requirements for such additional languages: students should discuss appropriate levels of competence with the appropriate faculty member(s).

MODERN SCHOLARLY LANGUAGES

Modern scholarly language requirements may be fulfilled by successful completion of a graduate level reading course (with a grade of B or higher); by petitioning to have extensive previous course work accepted (transcripts are required); or by a departmentally approved examination.

EC students are strongly encouraged to acquire reading competence in modern languages as soon as possible, in order to be able to do advanced research. Many EC students will want to acquire more than the two required languages, depending on their areas of interest.

EXAMINATIONS

Beyond language examinations, EC students are responsible for two qualifying examinations and a three-fold Preliminary Examination, as described below.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

The qualifying exams are intended to allow students to demonstrate the breadth of knowledge and critical skills necessary for a competent historian of ancient Mediterranean religions. One examination covers

Greek and Roman cults and philosophies, and is ordinarily administered by Professor Stowers. The other covers Judaism in the Greco-Roman world, and is ordinarily administered jointly by Professor Kraemer and Professor Satlow.

For both of the qualifying exams, the faculty help students construct an appropriate reading list. Many students find it helpful to take an actual reading course with a faculty member to prepare. Students who have no prior academic study of ancient Judaism should make every effort to take (or at least audit) a course with Professor Satlow as soon as possible. Students who do not initially pass either examination (in whole, or in part) should meet with the faculty member(s) responsible for the exam as soon as possible to arrange a course of study in order to re-take the examination, or a portion thereof, successfully.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

In EC, there are three preliminary examinations. The **FIRST PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION** covers Christianity in the early Empire (Augustus through Marcus Aurelius) with an emphasis on New Testament studies and the beginnings of Christianity. The **SECOND PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION** covers Christianity in Late Antiquity (Marcus Aurelius through Justinian). The **THIRD PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION** is determined by the focus of the student's proposed dissertation.

The format of the first two examinations varies, the result of consultation between the student and the EC faculty well in advance. Ordinarily, students propose discrete topics in each area, and develop reading lists, again in consultation with the faculty. Some students take these exams as multi-hour sit-down examinations. Others write take-home examinations, or formal papers, or even some combination of these.

The third preliminary examination is often satisfied by a lengthy research paper investigating the general content of the dissertation topic, with advance permission by the faculty.

TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

All EC graduate students are expected to serve as Teaching Assistants at least once in both RELS 400 (The NT and the Beginnings of Christianity) and RELS 410 (Christianity in Late Antiquity), in order to gain first-hand experience in undergraduate classes on these introductions to ancient Christianity. In addition, EC graduate students may TA in other courses as departmental needs require.

SAMPLE PLAN OF STUDY IN EC

Although there is some flexibility with the timetable and sequence of exams, time constraints make adherence to something like the following schedule a practical necessity. The following schedule assumes students who already hold a Master's degree in a relevant area. Students who do not should expect to take an additional year to pass the examinations.

FIRST YEAR

Most students devote their first year to ancient language work, graduate seminars in early Christianity, and other appropriate coursework, including preparation for the qualifying exams. If RELS 2000 is offered in this year, EC students should take it.

Students should consult with the EC advisor as soon as possible to determine how to prepare for the qualifying exams, which are usually taken at the end of the first or the beginning of the second year. For rapid progress through the program it is advisable to take at least one of these by the end of the first year. Students may take them in any order.

SECOND YEAR

No later than the beginning of the second year, in consultation with the EC advisor, students decide to concentrate either on Christianity in the early Empire or Christianity in late Antiquity. The other area becomes the minor field of concentration. At this time, students should begin to compose reading lists for the preliminary examinations, with guidance from the appropriate faculty member(s).

In the second year, students do any remaining necessary language work, take required seminars in early Christianity, and other appropriate courses. If RELS 2000 was not offered the prior year, second year students take it at this point. Students TA in RELS 400 and/or 410.

Ideally, by the end of the second year, EC students should have satisfied all their language requirements, and passed both qualifying examinations.

THIRD YEAR

Students who have met all the language requirements and passed the qualifying examinations, are now permitted to take the preliminary examinations. These exams are not intended to be comprehensive, but are adapted to students' individual interests and training, allowing them to develop areas of research and teaching competence beyond that of the dissertation. Students meet with the Early Christianity faculty to negotiate these areas and develop approved reading lists.

Third year students will ordinarily also take at least one EC seminar each semester, until they have passed the preliminary examinations in their entirety. They also TA in either RELS 400 or 410, if they did not do so the prior year, or if departmental staffing needs require them to do so again.

FOURTH YEAR (7TH SEMESTER)

Once students have passed all their examinations, they prepare, present and defend a dissertation prospectus, ideally early in the fall of the 4th year, and devote the remainder of the year to dissertation research, as well as departmental assignments as necessary.

RELIGIONS OF THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

DESCRIPTION

RAM students focus on the interdisciplinary study of religion throughout the ancient Mediterranean and Near-East. Choosing both a major and a related minor area, students examine ancient religions synchronically, understanding how they formed and functioned in their social, intellectual, and political contexts. RAM differs from both Ancient Judaism area and Early Christianity primarily in its intentionally comparative dimensions. Possible major or minor fields include:

Israelite religion
Judean religion (Judaism) from the fifth century BCE to first century CE
Judean religion (Judaism) from the first century CE to the seventh century CE
Greek religion
Roman religion
Early Christianity (first - fourth centuries CE)
Christianity in Late Antiquity (fourth - seventh centuries CE)
Early Islam (new, as of 2008-2009)

In addition to these, students may choose as a minor field only:

Northwest Semitic religion (i.e., Ugaritic, Phoenician, Aramean);
Egyptian religion
Mesopotamian religion

COURSEWORK

During the first year, students, in consultation with the advisory faculty, design a curriculum that allows for exploration while remaining appropriately focused. RELS 2000 should be taken as soon as possible. At the end of the first year, students choose both a major and minor field. Upon choosing these fields, each student is assigned an advisory committee consisting of one faculty member from the major and one from the minor field.

Students are expected to complete at least three seminars (or independent studies) in the major field and two in the minor field. All coursework must be completed prior to being allowed to sit for the Preliminary Examination.

LANGUAGES

ANCIENT LANGUAGES

Required ancient languages are determined according to the student's field, in consultation with the student's advisory committee. All major fields require knowledge of Greek; Israelite religion and all periods of Judaism also require proficiency in ancient Hebrew. Students studying Christianity are ordinarily expected to learn Latin and/or Coptic or Syriac. An adequate demonstration of competency will be determined by the student's advisory committee, but typically will consist of a three-hour translation test in which lexical aids may be used. All language requirements should be completed by the end of the student's second year (third if the student entered without an M.A.), and must be fulfilled prior to sitting for the Preliminary Examination.

MODERN SCHOLARLY LANGUAGES

In addition to demonstrating competence in two modern languages, ordinarily French and German, those students who major or minor in some fields, particularly Israelite religion and Judaism in any time period, must also demonstrate competency in modern scholarly Hebrew. Depending on the student's area of interest, additional modern languages may be desirable.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

Ordinarily, students who entered with an MA in a related field will spend their third year of study preparing for and taking the Preliminary Examination. The Examination is taken in four parts: Major field; Minor field; Ancillary area; Dissertation area. Two parts should be completed by January of that year and the entire Examination completed by the end of May. Students who entered without an MA in a related field are expected to complete the Preliminary Examination during their fourth year of study. Reading lists for the major and minor fields will be made in consultation with the student's advisory committee.

The "ancillary" examination is intended to allow the student to acquire additional expertise in an area that might bear directly on the student's interests or one that might complement the student's teaching abilities and is also determined in consultation with the advisory committee. A student with interests in early Jewish-Christian conflict might major in Judaism from the fifth century BCE to the first century CE, minor in Early Christianity, and focus the ancillary exam on theories of conflict and conflict-resolution. Similarly, a student with particular interest in exegesis might take this examination in some aspect of literary theory. This exam is administered by a faculty member chosen by the student in consultation with the student's advisory committee.

The fourth examination is also administered by a faculty member chosen by the student in consultation with the student's committee, and who usually becomes the dissertation director. The four parts of the examination may be taken in any order, although the fourth part is normally the last. The format of the exam will be determined by the student in consultation with the advisory committee.

RELIGION AND CRITICAL THOUGHT

DESCRIPTION

RCT students focus on issues, problems, and texts concerning three areas:

- 1) philosophy and religion
- 2) religious ethics (that is, the interrelation among religion, ethics, and politics);
- 3) approaches to the study of religion.

The program endeavors to integrate these areas, encouraging students to work at the intersection of normative and critical approaches, topics, and disciplines.

Given the program's emphasis on theory and critical thought, students are given broad exposure to classic and contemporary issues, problems, and texts associated with philosophy of religion, ethics, social-scientific theory, theology, and political philosophy. At the same time, students are required to gain competence in at least one religious tradition, in order to lend specificity to critical reflection on various aspects of religion and the study of religion. They must also demonstrate familiarity with a second religious tradition.

COURSEWORK

RCT students normally enroll in at least two RCT graduate seminars per year. In addition, students draw on resources throughout the humanities and social sciences, for example, in the departments of Philosophy, Political Science, Comparative Literature, Africana Studies, Judaic Studies, Classics, Anthropology, and

Sociology. In consultation with the the core RCT faculty, students develop a schedule that satisfies the requirement for competence in a religious tradition through course work. Additionally, depending on the judgment of the Advisory Faculty, students may demonstrate familiarity in a second tradition by course work done prior to attendance at Brown or by one or two additional courses at Brown.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

The usual modern scholarly language requirements apply to RCT students. Depending on their areas of interest, students may need to acquire additional language competence, for which there is no set examination structure.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

The Preliminary Exams should be concluded within a year of completing course work. This will ordinarily be the end of May of the student's third or fourth year, depending on whether the student entered the program with a Master's degree). The topic and format of the four exams are proposed by the student to the Core RCT Faculty and are subject to their approval. All may be satisfied by papers of approximately 25-35 double-spaced pages, including notes. Up to two of the exams may be satisfied by take-home examinations.

The four Preliminary Exams are defined as proficient treatment of the following:

- 1) a comparison of two historically significant figures or texts
- 2) a conceptual issue pertaining to the philosophy and theory of religion, religious ethics, political theory, or some combination of these
- 3) a substantive review essay of a noteworthy book published within the last 10 years or so
- 4) a topic that is pertinent to the student's dissertation.

The exam proposal, covering all four exams, is normally submitted no later than the first week of classes in the fall semester of the year dedicated to the exams. Two exams must be completed by mid-January. Shortly after the conclusion of each exam, students will meet with the Advisory Faculty for a full discussion of that exam. This meeting is an opportunity for intellectual exchange as well as an opportunity for the student to demonstrate competence in the field of the exam (although the passing of the exam is determined primarily by the quality of the student's written work).

RELIGION, CULTURE, AND COMPARISON

DESCRIPTION

The primary focus of RCC is comparison for the purpose of theorizing about religion and religions. Students in this program are expected early on to identify two distinct historical or cultural areas as a basis for comparison, and to infuse their work on those areas with extensive work on theorizing in religious studies. Drawing on the study of these distinct areas, students in RCC may also focus their work more specifically on particular issues, such as religion and social organization; religion, women and gender; religion and identity formation; religion and the law; and others.

Students in RCC are expected to have three areas of competence:

- 1) a carefully defined major area that is either historically or anthropologically/sociologically delimited
- 2) a minor cultural area that allows for a comparative perspective and knowledge of a different tradition

3) theory, theory formation, cross-cultural translation and comparison, to guide and shape the study of the major and minor cultural areas

COURSEWORK:

RCC students are required to take at least two advanced theory courses from other units (e. g., Anthropology, Sociology); at least 8 seminars and courses in the major area and at least 4 seminars and courses in the minor area. In a required seminar “Description, Re-description and Comparison,” (intended to be taken in the third year), students demonstrate that they can theorize problems, issues and categories of analysis in their major and minor areas and make comparisons between the areas.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

The usual modern scholarly language requirements apply to RCC students. Depending on their major and minor areas, students may need to acquire additional language competence, in order to allow for access to some basic critical tools. There is no set examination structure for such language work.

EXAMINATIONS:

RCC students take two sets of examinations:

- (1) a four hour written examination of theoretical competence and knowledge of theory based upon a bibliography produced by the department
- (2) A written preliminary examination of two (2) three hour parts that will test knowledge of the major cultural area and critical issues related to the study of that area. In addition, RCC students write a major paper in connection with RELS 2000 that formulates a series of critical questions and areas for theorization in the student’s major area, and that discusses relevant bibliography in the social sciences and religious studies.

TEACHING

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

The Department of Religious Studies utilizes doctoral students as Teaching Assistants (TAs) for two reasons: 1) pedagogical, to train students for the task of classroom instruction with the anticipation of their future placement as college and university faculty; 2) administrative, to provide staffing for larger departmental courses. Although graduate student support is no longer tied directly to teaching assistantships, employing students as TAs is part of how the Graduate School supports graduate students financially. Our commitment to the pedagogical concern is underscored by the fact that service as a Teaching Assistant for at least two semesters is a requirement of our doctoral programs, even for students who may have an outside Fellowship that prohibits them from teaching (such students are funded by Brown, if necessary, during their teaching service).

TAs have a serious professional responsibility to both their students and faculty supervisor. TAs are expected to be familiar with their responsibilities, professional obligations, and rights.

The guidelines, and resources for teaching, are available at

http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Sheridan_Center/teaching_at_brown/index.html.

The Sheridan Center for Teaching and learning offers an array of services to orient new TAs to the processes and issues involved in teaching, as well as to assist others in the strengthening of their teaching skills. The SCTL is an excellent resource center, and we urge all TAs to utilize this facility to the full. In particular, we advise all new TAs to attend the New Teaching Assistant Orientation offered by SCTL at the beginning of each school year as well as to participate in the Teaching Seminar, a series of lectures and workshops, that SCTL offers on a yearly basis to introduce TAs to pedagogical issues and to help them develop reflective teaching skills. Many students avail themselves of special teaching certification programs at the Center.

THE APPRENTICESHIP MODEL

In this Department, we understand the training of future teachers to be best undertaken through an apprenticeship model. TAs thus work closely with the professor on an assigned course.

THE PROFESSOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The professor has primary responsibility for the syllabus, for establishing course requirements and grading standards, for monitoring the quality of grading to ensure consistency of standards, for lectures, and for supervision of the TA. The professor may seek input from the TA on these matters, and may also invite the TA to participate in the design of the course.

THE TA'S RESPONSIBILITIES

According to the Graduate School's website, TA's assist instructors "on all work related to the instruction of a particular course." The precise duties of a TA depend upon the structure of the particular course. In Religious Studies, TAs are ordinarily responsible for running one or two discussion sections of a course and for grading the written assignments and examinations of the students in those sections. To enable effective handling of these responsibilities, TAs normally attend all class lectures, hold regular office hours for their students, and meet regularly with the professor concerning the content and progress of the course as well as

the content of section meetings. In accordance with University policy, a TAship will normally require 15-18 hours per week (with a limit of an average of 20 hours per week). It is understood that the time requirements will vary throughout the semester: the heaviest periods will be when grading. A preliminary meeting between professors and TAs prior to the start of their courses, to go over the syllabus and check on assignment dates, should allow TAs sufficient notice for adjustments in their own academic schedules to accommodate the fluctuations in workload.

In addition, TAs may be asked to hold review sessions prior to examinations. In cases where more than one TA is assigned to a course, TAs often find it useful to prepare together for section meetings. In many courses, TAs are strongly encouraged to present a lecture or two in order to gain experience before the class.

Faculty may ask TAs for some administrative assistance on matters directly related to the assigned course: e.g., preparing handouts, checking on reserve readings, posting notices regarding class meetings, maintaining course websites, monitoring attendance, etc.

TAs are not expected to assist faculty in work unrelated to the assigned course. TAs who feel that they have been asked to perform tasks unrelated to the course, or that are in some other way inappropriate, should discuss this first with the faculty member, if at all possible. Students may also seek the advice of the DGS in resolving such situations, (or the Department Chair, if the DGS is the course faculty member).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

IN THE STUDENT'S AREAS OF TRAINING

Most of the time TAs will be assigned to courses that bear directly on their area of study. Graduate students will not only be most familiar with the material in these courses but should also find them useful for their own needs, for example in mastering material for their own examinations. Moreover, these courses will often be the sort of courses graduate students will find themselves teaching in their future employment. Close attention to matters of course design, perspective, pedagogical methods and goals will help TAs learn how to prepare a syllabus of their own as well as different classroom strategies. Occasionally, students may be invited to serve as TAs in related courses offered through other departments, e.g., Early Christianity students might serve in a Classics course, or Religion and Critical Thought students might serve in a Political Science course.

OUTSIDE A STUDENT'S AREA

Graduate students may sometimes be asked to serve as TAs in courses outside their stated expertise, as department staffing needs require. Such assignments often afford students broader teaching experience that enhances their qualifications for future teaching positions, particularly in departments seeking faculty able to teach in a variety of areas. In making such assignments, the Department tries to find the best possible match, and considers previous student coursework, research or other relevant experience and training. Final authority for TA assignment is vested in the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair.

ADVANCE PLANNING

TA assignments are tentatively planned for the following year by the Director of Graduate Studies and Department Chair in the late spring. Such plans are made taking into account the Department's announced course offerings, the number of graduate students eligible to serve as teaching assistants, spring pre-enrollment figures, and projection of course enrollments based on previous patterns. However, enrollments can fluctuate unexpectedly and so can staffing arrangements. Assignments can only be finalized at the beginning of each semester. Graduate students, like faculty, must allow a certain flexibility in this regard.

FINANCIAL MATTERS (FUNDING & FEES)

UNIVERSITY FUNDING SOURCES

Currently, all admitted Ph.D. students are promised five years of funding, provided they make satisfactory progress and otherwise remain in good standing. Ordinarily, students are not expected to serve as Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants or Proctors in the first year, although there are occasionally exceptions. Ordinarily, students should expect to work for the University in one of these capacities in years two, three and four, and to have the fifth year free to work on the dissertation. Sixth-year funding is occasionally available, but students are strongly advised not to plan on such additional support.

SUMMER SUPPORT

Students admitted in 2008 and following ordinarily receive three years of summer support, as specified in the offer of admission from the Graduate School. Students who wish to be considered for summer support after these three years should consult with the DGS as early as possible. Summer funding allocations are ordinarily made in the early spring.

LOANS

Loans, both short and long term, are offered through Brown Office of Financial Aid. To apply for a loan, students must fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form on-line, at www.fafsa.ed.gov, in order to determine financial need. Consult the Graduate School website (Support: Student Loans) for further details and the Brown code, as well as the OFA website. Try not to do this at the last minute, since it takes a while for this data to be processed. Loan requests can be submitted throughout the year, although earlier is better: later in the year, there may or may not be funds remaining. All questions about loans and other such aid should be directed to the Office of Financial Aid and/or the Graduate School.

TAXES

Your tax liability depends upon the kind of support you receive in any given semester. You are responsible for knowing your tax liability. Questions about these matters should be addressed to the appropriate associate or assistant Dean at the Graduate School. The Graduate School can also provide a list of acceptable "educational" expenses.

FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

The University does not withhold taxes from Fellowship Awards. The portion of the fellowship that is used to cover tuition, fees, and required books and supplies is not taxable. However, funds used to cover room, board, travel, and research are considered a form of taxable income. Students who receive fellowships are responsible for reporting their income accordingly, and for paying any taxes incurred.

TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS, RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS, PROCTORSHIPS

Taxes are withheld from the bi-monthly checks (disbursed on the 15th and last day of every month) for students with TAs, Research Assistantships, Teaching Fellow appointments, and Proctorships.

TRAVEL FUNDS

CONFERENCE TRAVEL

In order to help defray the costs associated with travel to professional conferences, the Graduate School makes available grants of up to \$500.00 for students who are presenting a paper at recognized professional conferences. Students in years 2 through 5 are eligible, for one paper per year. Sixth-year students may be eligible if sufficient funds are available. There is no longer an application form, but students will need to submit an accounting of their expenses, including original receipts, and documentation of the conference participation. For details, please see the Graduate Student Website (Support: Internal Funding: Conference Travel).

In addition, students presenting conference papers must consult with a faculty member in their area about the suitability of the proposed paper, and with the DGS, since the department must certify that there are no further departmental funds available for these purposes. The Department currently does provide small amounts of travel funding for graduate students: apply to the DGS.

RESEARCH TRAVEL

In certain cases, the University also subsidizes graduate student research travel up to \$1800, for students who already have other travel grants and require supplemental funding. For details, deadlines and forms, see the Graduate Student website (Support: Internal Funding: Research Travel).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

In the past, the Graduate School awarded limited funding to help with professional development, such as funds to help with unexpected publication costs for a student's article to appear in a professional journal. We are not presently certain whether such funding is still available. If you have such a need, consult the DGS first.

In recent years, the Department has also made available very modest funds for such expenses. Such requests should be directed to the DGS.

EXTERNAL FUNDING

Some graduate students receive funding for one or more years from foundations and organizations external to Brown. Such funds allow students to defer their University funding and also entitle students to various incentives from the Graduate School. Consult the Graduate School website for details (Support: External Funding: Incentives Policy). In Religious Studies, outside fellowships are often for the dissertation year, but in recent years, students in the Department have been awarded fellowships for course work and exam years as well. Students are strongly encouraged to seek outside funding at all levels. Consult the Graduate School website (Support: External Funding) for information. Students who plan to apply for outside funding should be in contact with Deans Lindstrom and Walton, at the Graduate School, as well as the DGS. The DGS also circulates information that the department receives on grants and fellowships relevant to Religious Studies, such as the Newcombe, Jacob Javits, and Ford.

EMPLOYMENT

Brown's guaranteed summer funding has decreased the need for students to work in unrelated areas over the summer, but some students may need to supplement their summer stipends with part-time summer positions. The Student Employment Office is a good place to begin a summer job search, but remember to start early since postings for summer jobs go up as early as spring break for some jobs. It is also possible for advanced graduate students to teach a course for the Brown Summer and Continuing Studies programs, and some graduate students have served as Resident Advisors as well. Keep in mind, though, that Religious Studies summer courses have often been cancelled at the last minute due to insufficient minimum enrollments. Other graduate students are often a helpful source of information about local (and other) summer employment.

FEEES

Under the new funding arrangements graduate students are generally responsible for various small fees. For details, consult both the Graduate School website (Support: Tuition, Fees and Billing) and the Brown University Student Billing Guide, available on the Bursar's website.

STUDENT ACTIVITY & HEALTH INSURANCE FEES

Students are required to pay a small "Student Activities Fee" each semester (presently \$20).

All graduate students on fellowship support receive health insurance through the university. Students should not receive any bills regarding health insurance. However, there is a separate fee for University Health Services. Students on full support generally receive this fee as part of their support. All students, however, are responsible for the summer coverage fee if they plan to use University Health Services over the summer.

REGISTRATION FEES

The Registrar's Office charges a variety of fees for late registration and the like. Forewarned is forearmed: consult their website in advance!

DISSERTATION FILING FEE

Students who are inactive and returning from an approved leave of absence solely for the purpose of defending and filing the dissertation, and who meet the conditions established by the Graduate School are charged a filing fee of \$150 for the semester in which the dissertation is submitted.

DISSERTATION HANDLING FEE

There is a small fee for processing the dissertation, currently \$50.00.

READMISSION FEE

There is also a readmission fee for students returning from most leaves: consult the Graduate School website (Support: Tuition and Fees) for the formula. Students on medical leave and leaves for having just had or adopting a baby are exempt.

STATUS

STUDY ELSEWHERE

CROSS-REGISTRATION WITH HARVARD

Students may register for courses at Harvard without paying additional tuition. It is important to note, however, that students may not enroll in courses at Harvard Divinity School unless such courses are also cross-listed in the catalogue of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, or unless the instructor is a member of the faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Occasionally, special arrangements can be made to take a Divinity School course not taught by such an instructor: check with the DGS in advance.

EXCHANGE SCHOLAR PROGRAM

The graduate schools at Berkeley, Brown, Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, Stanford, and Yale have an Exchange Scholar Program which allows students at each of these universities to spend time studying at another school without paying additional tuition. Students in this program remain active students at their home institutions. See the Graduate School website for details (Academics: Partnerships and Exchanges: Exchange Scholar Program).

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Leaves of Absence are granted for a variety of professional, educational, medical, psychological, and personal reasons (including parental leave and family care leave).

OBTAINING A LEAVE

Students considering such leave should consult as early as possible with their advisors, the DGS, and the Graduate School, as appropriate. Leaves of absence must be approved first by the department, and then by

the Graduate School. They are granted for one semester or one year and may be extended to two years, if necessary.

When the Department approves a leave, it ordinarily includes a willingness to re-admit the student, although such readmission may depend on the student satisfying various conditions, laid out in writing at the time the leave is granted. The form required for a Leave of Absence is available on the Graduate School website, as are the details and conditions for various leaves (Academics: Rules and Regulations: Student Status Issues: Leaves of Absence).

RE-ADMISSION FROM LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students returning from Leave of Absence do not ordinarily need to apply formally for re-admission, unless the Department requests such an application. However, students whose return was conditional must satisfy those conditions before being returned to active status. Students seeking re-admission after medical or psychological leave must have their physician write to the appropriate person in Health Services or Psychological Services and confirm their ability to resume their studies. Financial Aid issues, and remaining degree requirements are best discussed with the DGS. Students wishing to return from leave must ordinarily indicate their intention to return by May 1 for the following fall, or November 1 for the following spring.

PART-TIME STUDY

Graduate students are ordinarily expected to be enrolled full-time, and students are not admitted for part-time study. However, it is sometimes possible to study on a part-time status, with the approval of the DGS. Simply enrolling in fewer than four courses, however, does not automatically confer part-time status. The DGS must officially inform the Dean of the Graduate School of the student's intentions. Without such notice students will continue to be billed for four courses, even if they are formally enrolled in less than four. Students should also be aware of the financial consequences of adopting this status. They may lose some or all financial assistance and become liable for at least partial repayment of existing student loans. Students should check the fine print on any student loan agreements. Requests for changes in status must be submitted in writing to the Graduate School, but there is no official form.

SECOND MASTER'S DEGREE

Doctoral students may earn a second Master's degree from Brown, in a related field, without an additional charge for tuition. No courses or theses, however, will count toward more than one degree. The form for obtaining a second Master's degree is available on the Graduate School home page, under Forms (Second Master's).

SPECIAL STUDIES

Students who determine, after one year of full-time study, that their work cannot be accommodated within existing Departmental programs may petition the Graduate Council for approval and permission to enroll as a doctoral student in Special Studies. At least three members of the University Faculty must agree to sponsor the program, one in a supervisory capacity. For further information, consult the Graduate School website, and contact the DGS.

TRAVELING SCHOLARS

Traveling Scholars are active students whose research requires them to be away from Brown. The requisite distance from Brown is not precisely defined, but Boston is sufficiently distant. As full-time students, Traveling Scholars may still take out student loans and defer payment on existing loans. There is a modest fee per semester for this status, and such students may not use Brown facilities during this time. However, they may retain health insurance through Brown's plan. The form for requesting this status is available on the Graduate School website (*Academics: Rules and Regulations: Student Status Issues*), but a letter is also sufficient, which should be sent first to the DGS, and then, with the DGS' approval, to the Graduate School.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

As students progress in their studies it is a good idea to become a member of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) and/or the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL), depending on one's interests. Both organizations publish newsletters and other publications of interest to scholars of religion. For many years, they jointly sponsored an annual meeting in November at which scholars from all fields in Religious Studies gathered to share information and present papers. As of 2008, these meetings will be at separate times and locations (although in one upcoming year, they are co-ordinated). Each has a website with various useful resources, including student membership information. Also, the Department has a student liaison to the AAR who is responsible for providing students with information about joining the Academy and attending the annual meeting. Some students may also wish to join one or more of the more specialized academic societies or societies in related fields. Faculty should be able to suggest various appropriate possibilities.

Overall, Annual Meetings are a good place to see what life as a scholar of religious studies is about. These meetings are a good place to meet people, both established scholars and graduate student peers at other institutions. Students are generally encouraged to attend the meetings by the time they begin work on their dissertations, if not before.

Many graduate students also give their first professional papers at such meetings. For the AAR and the SBL, a Call for Papers is sent out early each year (in January, usually). Students who wish to submit a proposal should first consult with a faculty advisor about the feasibility of the paper proposal. Once a faculty member thinks this is advisable, students can then follow the instructions for the appropriate Section in either organization. Many job interviews also take place at the Annual Meetings (although it's not presently clear how this will work with the new split of the meetings).

JOB PLACEMENT

WHEN TO START A SEARCH

Students who hope to be competitive for positions should, ideally, have substantially completed the dissertation when they begin applying for full-time teaching positions. Prospective employers of Ph.D. candidates now often expect applicants to have the degree in hand at the time of appointment, if not before, and/or to read a dissertation near enough to completion to convince them that it will be finished before the job begins. Not only is it difficult to complete a dissertation while teaching full time, there may be serious consequences to taking a full-time tenure-track position before the dissertation is completed. People whose dissertations remain unfinished after they have accepted a job offer may find that they will be appointed at a lesser rank, and at a lesser salary. In rare instances, students who have not completed the dissertation by the time of appointment may even find the appointment itself in jeopardy. Students who obtain a tenure-track appointment before finishing may also find their tenure process affected if it takes more than a year to complete the dissertation. The bottom line: make every effort to have the dissertation completed by the time you begin applying for tenure-track positions, or even full-time non-tenure track positions.

Nevertheless, it will occasionally be desirable (or necessary) to apply for teaching positions before the dissertation is complete, in which case it is essential to have a significant portion of the dissertation in polished form, to offer as a writing sample.

HOW TO START A SEARCH

Starting a job search has two components: identifying appropriate available positions and preparing one's application materials.

The publication entitled “*Openings*” (available online through both the AAR and SBL websites) is perhaps the best place to start looking for jobs in the field. Often schools will indicate whether they will be interviewing at an Annual Meeting.

Students may also find it helpful to consult such useful but less comprehensive publications as *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and the *Affirmative Action Register*, which occasionally advertise positions before they appear on *Openings* (and may also advertise positions in other related areas that will not show up on *Openings*). Throughout the year, faculty in the Department also receive announcements of job openings which they forward to the DGS, again sometimes before these are posted elsewhere. The Department posts notices of such positions on the bulletin board as they are received.

DOSSIERS

It is a good idea to begin building a dossier early in the year one plans to apply for positions. The Career Services Office in Pembroke Hall on Meeting Street will organize dossiers for students based on the student's specifications. Though one may include various kinds of documents in the dossier, there is a page limit, so check with both Career Services and faculty advisors to determine what is allowed and what is essential.

In general, the dossier should contain a vita, letters of recommendation from professors, and other pertinent information such as sample syllabi and possibly letters from former students or from other people who can evaluate one's teaching or administrative abilities. Always remember to keep the dossier up to date, and make sure that outdated information has been removed as necessary. Students should especially avoid sending out a dossier which includes two recommendations from the same professor, which can happen if one request letters at different times during the year. Verify that the dossier is complete before copies are mailed out.

CURRICULUM VITAE

The Curriculum Vitae included in the dossier will generally provide details on one's educational background including preliminary examinations, any grants or fellowships received, employment history, teaching experience and administrative work, as well as on papers presented or published. It will usually include a brief abstract of the dissertation, and any other information relevant to one's academic and professional life such as memberships in academic societies. Because one may meet potential employers even outside of formal interviews, it is a good idea to keep the C.V. updated and to take copies to professional meetings and events of various sorts.

RESEARCH DOSSIER

If one chooses to present a research dossier in addition to the Career Service dossier, it will generally include an overall statement of one's career plans for the coming five to ten years, as well as specific ideas for books, journal articles, and other research projects and publications. One might also wish to include writing samples in this dossier in order to demonstrate the ability to research and write in a scholarly fashion. Whether or not one has a formal research dossier in hand during an interview, one should nevertheless be prepared to offer this kind of information to potential employers. Often candidates will be asked what exactly they plan to accomplish on junior sabbatical leave and what books they intend to publish. In this sense, getting a job depends as much on one's past performance as it does on the ability to articulate future plans and on the ability to prove one's capacity to fulfill them.

TEACHING DOSSIER

A teaching dossier will often be composed of sample syllabi, letters from colleagues and former students, course evaluations, statements of pedagogical approach, and possibly student essays. Because of the page limit on dossiers at the Career Services Office, candidates will often compile the teaching dossier themselves, and send it out as appropriate or have a copy in hand during an interview. The purpose of such a file is not only to demonstrate one's proven ability to teach, but also to emphasize one's commitment to teaching. Since certain institutions may value this aspect of an overall portfolio more than others, one may choose to include these materials only with some applications.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

(TAKEN FROM THE GRADUATE SCHOOL REGULATIONS)

Our expectation is that you will have the best possible relationship with colleagues and faculty during the course of your graduate work at Brown. It is possible, however, that difficulties will arise. Should you have a grievance, it is important to know how it can best be handled. It is University policy that each and every graduate student is entitled to a fair and prompt hearing of grievances. It is also policy that all other avenues of resolution are to be exhausted before a formal grievance procedure can begin. According to Section 10 of the official Faculty Rules and Regulations, the student must attempt to resolve the issue directly with the person or persons involved.

In the event that the attempt is unsuccessful, the next step is to take the issue either to the departmental Director of Graduate Study (DGS), or to the Chair. It is the responsibility of the Chair or DGS to have an informal discussion with all involved parties, to the end of achieving resolution via mediation. It is also the Chair or DGS's obligation to prepare a memorandum outlining the problem, steps taken, and the proposed solution; copies of this memorandum are given to all concerned parties.

If this step does not result in a mutually satisfactory outcome, the next step is to ask the DGS or Chair to determine whether or not the question at issue is departmental in nature. If it is, a written request for a review with the Chair of the department should be filed. If it is not determined to be a departmental issue, no further action can be taken at the departmental level. Instead, the issue must be taken to the Dean of the Graduate School, where the aggrieved can seek advice and direction in the matter. If there is disagreement with the determination of whether the issues are departmental in nature, an appeal concerning that decision may be made to the Dean of the Graduate School, whose decision is final.

If the issue at hand is indeed departmental in nature, a written appeal must be filed with the Chair of the department. This appeal must ask for a review of the question and must specify the injury alleged, the reasons for the student's belief that he or she is aggrieved, and the remedy sought. The Chair may either refer the appeal to a committee of review or to the departmental Faculty. For more on the difference between these two bodies and the procedures regarding disputes please refer to the Faculty Rules.

As expeditiously as possible the committee of review will hear the student, consider the evidence, confer with other persons concerned, and prepare a comprehensive report of findings and a response to the appeal. Committee decisions are made by a simple majority vote of the members. It is the Chair's duty to carry out the directions of the committee. Once a decision has been made, a memorandum of what was done is prepared and a copy is given to the student.