
HANDBOOK

FOR

STUDENTS AND FACULTY

OF THE

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

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Goals, Courses, Fields of Study

Goals: The Graduate Program in Religious Studies comprises programs of study leading to the MA and PhD degrees. The primary goal of both degree programs is to prepare persons for academic leadership in the field, and hence for professional careers as teacher-scholars in colleges, universities, and schools of theology. The MA degree program also aims to accommodate the qualified nonprofessional student interested in advanced work in religious studies within the context of the liberal arts and sciences.

Courses: All students in the Graduate Program in Religious Studies take four courses in common over a two-year period (one course each semester) which together constitute an ongoing Core Seminar in Religious Studies. The individual components are:

- RELI 6301, The Philosophical Study of Religion
- RELI 6302, Approaches to Asian Religions
- RELI 6303, History, Theory, and Method in Religious Studies
- RELI 6304, Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion

Beyond these four courses, students in the MA program take an additional eighteen credit hours of course work, for a total of thirty credit hours. Students in the PhD program take an additional thirty-six credit hours, for a total of forty-eight credit hours.

This additional course work, primarily in the student's intended field of specialization, may include courses of three different types:

1. *Regular courses* in Southern Methodist University that are approved for graduate study in the student's field. (Undergraduate courses will be approved only if they have a particular relevance to the student's course of study and only if the student has reached a prior agreement with the instructor on additional work to be done to raise the requirements of the course to the graduate level.)
2. *Directed study courses* in which one or more students and a faculty member agree to meet not less than six times during the term to discuss the material under study and which require the submission of substantial written work to which the faculty member assigns grades as well as assigning an overall letter grade for the course as a whole.
3. *Independent study courses* in which the student and a faculty member agree on a bibliography for study that the student will pursue independently and which do not require either the submission of written work or the assignment of letter grades; rather, these courses are pass/fail and require one meeting near the end of the semester to determine completion of the reading..

Directed study and independent study courses are arranged individually by the student or students with an appropriate member of the faculty who is willing to undertake such a course.

Each student is encouraged to take advantage of regular courses to the extent that it is possible and reasonably aligns with the student's course needs. There is no limit to the number of courses a student may take in the form of directed study courses. MA students may take as much as six credit hours of work (two courses) in independent study, and PhD students may take as much as twelve credit hours

(four courses) of work in independent study. (If any credit has been waived in recognition of pertinent graduate work completed elsewhere, the amount of independent study credit permitted will be reduced accordingly.)

Students should be aware that, outside Perkins School of Theology and the Religious Studies Department in Dedman College, independent study courses may not be an option.

See below under “Degree of the Doctor of Philosophy” for additional information about specific course requirements that apply to students in the field of New Testament.

Fields of Study: Each student in the PhD program specializes in one of the following six fields of study:

1. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
2. New Testament
3. The Christian Tradition
4. Systematic Theology
5. Religious Ethics [Christian Ethics]
6. Religion and Culture

These six fields of specialization require comprehensive field examinations as follows:

Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

1. *Ancient Near Eastern, Hellenistic, and Greco-Roman Texts and Contexts*
This examination covers the historical background and literary milieu of the Hebrew Bible and their possible influence upon formation of the biblical texts and canon in (1) pre-exilic and exilic (pre-Assyrian, Assyrian, and Neo-Babylonian) periods and (2) post-exilic (Persian, Hellenistic, and Greco-Roman) periods. Successful completion of the exam will demonstrate the student’s familiarity with major historical sources and literary compositions of the mentioned periods and demonstrate his/her ability to employ these materials in biblical interpretation and to engage critically major modern and post-modern trends and theories pertaining to the study of the Hebrew Bible in different ancient contexts.
2. *Hermeneutics and Basic Topics of Hebrew Bible Studies*
This examination covers (1) the hermeneutical developments as they pertain to Hebrew Bible studies since the emergence of the modern worldview, with special consideration given to contemporary debates on social location of the reader and (2) basic topics in the study of particular biblical corpora and books. Successful completion of the exam demonstrates the student’s ability to engage critically major trends and theories in modern and postmodern study of these issues.
3. *Methodologies of Hebrew Bible Studies*
This examination covers diachronic/historical-critical and synchronic/literary-critical scholarly approaches to the Hebrew Bible. Successful completion of the exam will demonstrate the student’s understanding of the principles and presuppositions underlying these approaches and of the scholarly debates about their strengths and limitations as well as his/her ability to apply one or more approaches from each group to specific texts of the Hebrew Bible.
4. *Elective* (chosen in view of the student’s anticipated dissertation)

New Testament

1. *Background of the New Testament: The Greco-Roman Milieu and Hellenistic Judaism*
Successful completion of this exam should demonstrate the student's ability to engage critically: (1) the governance, rhetorical, religious, social, and philosophical practices relevant to the Roman imperial context; and (2) the history of the various schools, movements, and groups within Judaism in the Hellenistic and the Roman imperial periods.
2. *History of the Interpretation of the New Testament: Introductory and Classical Issues*
Successful completion of this exam should demonstrate the student's ability to engage critically both the development of early Christianity and the evolution of the discipline of New Testament Studies from the 18th century to the 1970s.
3. *Contemporary Methods of Interpretation*
Successful completion of this exam should demonstrate the student's ability to engage critically some of the major issues and figures in contemporary methods/perspectives in New Testament Studies, that is, from the 1970s to the present. The exam should also demonstrate the student's ability to apply one or more contemporary methods/perspectives to New Testament writings.
4. *Elective* (chosen in view of the student's anticipated dissertation)

The Christian Tradition

1. *Survey of the History of Christian Doctrine and Theology*
The historical theology comprehensive field examination covers four broad periods in the development of Christian theology and doctrine: ancient (100–600), medieval (600–1400), early modern (1400–1700) and modern (1700–the present). Students are expected to exhibit substantial knowledge of one or more important theological figures from each of these four periods, some knowledge of the theological diversity of each period, and knowledge of at least one of the major theological or doctrinal debates of each period. The exam as a whole should engage the student in reflection on several doctrines or theological topics and should provide opportunities for critical assessment of the historical material under consideration.
2. *Survey of an Area Commensurate with Research Focus*
Students should choose a survey area commensurate with their research focus. The exam should involve reading of primary as well as secondary historical texts relevant to this survey area from the four broad fields also covered in the examination on the history of Christian doctrine, namely ancient (100–600), medieval (600–1400), early modern (1400–1700) and modern (1700–the present) Christianity. Students should be able to contextualize primary sources within these periods with respect to social, political, cultural, and possibly regional developments relevant to the texts. Students should demonstrate their familiarity with major scholarly works and methodological approaches to the historical study of the survey area.
3. *Relevant Developments in a Specific Time Period*
This exam covers important theological, ecclesiastical, liturgical, and/or other relevant developments in Christian history during a specific time period and usually within a certain geographical region (e.g., the Roman Empire in the ancient period, Latin America in the early modern period, or Britain and North America in the modern period). The student must demonstrate both knowledge of these developments and familiarity with the major scholarly works and methodological approaches to the issues for the period in question.
4. *Intellectual, Cultural, and Social History in Corresponding Period*
In order to successfully complete this examination, a student must demonstrate (a) knowledge

of the major trends in intellectual and cultural history (broadly defined to include political, economic, and social developments) during a period in some broad geographical context contemporaneous with the subject matter of the third examination, and (b) familiarity with the central historiographical issues for the period in question.

Systematic Theology

1. *Systematic Theology*

The systematic theology comprehensive field examination normally covers four areas: method in theology (at least two different points of view), major theologians (at least two important positions), one major doctrine (in its historical background and contemporary discussion), and an issue in contemporary theology. In drawing up the plan for the exam, the student should note and take advantage of opportunities for coordination and integration among these four areas. Students should also keep in mind the possibility of similar coordination between the systematic theology examination and the examinations in the other sub-fields required.

2. *Historical Theology*

The historical theology comprehensive field examination covers four broad periods in the development of Christian theology and doctrine: ancient (100–600), medieval (600–1400), early modern (1400–1700) and modern (1700–1900). Students are expected to exhibit substantial knowledge of one or more important theological figures from each of these four periods, some knowledge of the theological diversity of each period, and knowledge of at least one of the major theological or doctrinal debates of each period. The exam as a whole should engage the student in reflection on several doctrines or theological topics and should provide opportunities for critical assessment of the historical material under consideration.

3. *Philosophical Theology*

The comprehensive field examination in philosophical theology focuses on the critical and constructive engagement of the student with one or more philosophical traditions and their implications for the study of theology, as well as the implications of the study of theology for those philosophical traditions. Students who engage one tradition are expected to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and a good grasp of its location in the wider field of philosophy. Students who engage various traditions should develop a sense of their interconnectedness and the critical and constructive implications that emerge at the intersection of these traditions.

4. *Moral Theology*

The comprehensive field examination in moral theology generally concentrates on contemporary moral theology with some understanding of the history of Christian Ethics and philosophical ethics. Students should work out the details with the professor(s). Students often take the MT 6303 Perkins course if they have no similar background, do other assigned readings, and/or take advantage of other course offerings. In drawing up the plan for the exam, students should note and take advantage of opportunities for coordination between the moral theology examination and examinations in other fields.

Religious Ethics [Christian Ethics]

1. *Contemporary Theological Ethics*

Successful completion of this exam should demonstrate the student's ability to critically engage some of the major issues, figures, and theories in contemporary theological ethics.

The exam should also demonstrate the student's ability to compare these issues, figures, and theories with one another and trace developments from the 1920s to the present.

2. *History of Christian Ethics*

Successful completion of this exam should demonstrate the student's broad knowledge of and critical engagement with major figures, ideas, and developments in the history of Christian ethics, beginning with pre-Christian Greek and Hebrew ethics and continuing through Early Christianity, the Middle Ages, the Reformation period, and Early Modern religious thought.

3. *Philosophical Ethics*

Successful completion of this exam should demonstrate the student's critical engagement with major issues, figures, and theories in moral philosophy from the seventeenth century to the present.

4. One of the following: *Systematic Theology, Philosophical Theology, Biblical Ethics, Applied Ethics, or Ethics of another major religious tradition.*

Successful completion of this exam should demonstrate the student's critical engagement with another discipline that is closely related to the study of religious ethics, with theological and philosophical approaches to a specific moral problem, or with the history, figures, and issues in the ethics of another major religious tradition. The exam should also demonstrate the student's readiness for independent study of this discipline, problem, or tradition in his/her dissertation research.

Religion and Culture

1. *Modern Study of Religion*

This examination covers representative works which have been and continue to be of theoretical and/or methodological significance in the academic study of religion. Students are to demonstrate knowledge of the major concepts, theories, methodologies and empirical findings in the study of religion today.

2. *Contemporary Theories and Critiques of Religion and Culture*

Contemporary theories and critiques of religion and culture provide both critical evaluation and further development of the modern academic study of religion (see field exam 1). The purpose of field exam 2 is to demonstrate a grasp of several different recent developments, with substantial attention given to perspectives that go beyond the dominant models of modern Western academic study as well as to the growing number of interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary approaches. Students must demonstrate the ability to deal with the material both critically and constructively.

3. *Religion in Comparative Perspective*

Successful completion of this exam should demonstrate the student's ability to critically engage some of the major issues and figures relevant to the comparative study of religions in cultural and historical contexts. The student is expected to demonstrate familiarity with the history of and contemporary problems in the comparative study of religion, and also to read eight to ten sources specifically relevant to two or more religious traditions.

4. *Elective* (chosen in view of the student's anticipated dissertation)

Principles of Governance

1. All tenured and tenure-track members of the faculty of Perkins School of Theology and of the Department of Religious Studies in Dedman College, along with the Maguire University Professor of Ethics and the Scurlock Professor of Human Values, are members of the faculty of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies, unless, in consultation with the Dean of Perkins, the chair of the Department, or the Provost (as the case may be), they explicitly exempt themselves from membership. Other members of the faculty of Southern Methodist University may become members of the GPRS faculty upon the recommendation of the Director, by vote of the GPRS faculty.
2. The GPRS faculty as a body exercises academic oversight of the program; individual members of that faculty participate in instructional activity as their interests and competences and the needs of the program may determine. A member of the faculty is expected to attend its meetings; to serve on the Steering Committee if elected; and to participate, as appropriate, in the work of one or more fields.
3. The faculty shall establish, review, and revise policies governing admission, curriculum, fields of study, and degree requirements, subject to the approval of the Graduate Council of Dedman College. It shall consider other matters pertinent to the operation and well-being of the program that may be brought to its attention and shall act upon them, or recommend action to others, as may be appropriate to the case.
4. The faculty shall meet annually in April or May, and on the call of the Director at other times as the need may arise. The Director shall preside. The Program Coordinator shall serve as secretary to the faculty and shall keep the minutes of its meetings.
5. The faculty shall delegate certain responsibilities to a Steering Committee.

Composition:

The Steering Committee shall consist of the Director, who will serve as its chair; the Chair of the Department of Religious Studies; one member of the faculty for each field of study in the GPRS, and, if recommended by the Director, one or more additional faculty members; and two GPRS students. The overall composition of the Steering Committee should reflect diversity in gender, ethnicity, academic affiliation, and other pertinent respects.

The Director and the Chair of the Department shall serve *ex officio*. The other faculty members of the Committee shall serve two-year terms, staggered so that approximately half will be replaced each year. The new members shall be elected by the GPRS faculty each spring for the ensuing academic year, upon the nomination of the faculty of the respective fields. The Director may, at his or her discretion, nominate one or more additional faculty members. Nominations may be made from the floor. The student members shall serve

staggered two-year terms, so that one student shall be elected by the registered students of the GPRS each spring for the ensuing year.

The student members of the Steering Committee shall participate fully in the work of the Committee except when individual student cases involving confidential information are being considered.

The Program Coordinator shall serve as secretary to the Steering Committee and shall keep the minutes of its meetings.

Duties:

The Steering Committee shall exercise general oversight of the program on behalf of the faculty. It shall be responsible for ongoing program assessment and for long-range planning and shall bring to the GPRS faculty any recommendations it deems advisable concerning modifications in any aspect of the program. It shall serve as an advocate for the interests of the program within the University and shall work with the Director, the Dean of Perkins School of Theology, the Dean of Dedman College, and the Dean of Graduate Studies to further these interests.

It shall oversee the process by which applications for admission to the GPRS are considered, and, with the advice of the faculty of the various fields of study, shall act upon applications.

It shall monitor the progress of students in course, act upon students' admission to candidacy, and consider individual student petitions for any variations from normal curricular requirements.

Upon the recommendation of the faculty of the pertinent fields, it shall approve students' plans of study and dissertation proposals.

It shall undertake such other duties as the faculty may assign to it.

6. The faculty involved in each field of study shall collectively undertake certain responsibilities in the program. The faculty in the individual fields of study shall be convened as needed

- to monitor the progress of students in course, to review students' plans of study, to consider the relationship between faculty resources in the field and students' interests and objectives, and to advise the students, each other, and the Steering Committee accordingly;
- to review students' dissertation proposals;
- to review applications for admission and to make recommendations to the Steering Committee;
- to nominate faculty for membership on the Steering Committee; and
- to take up any other matters pertinent to the operation of the field that they may wish to consider, whether on their own initiative or upon the request of the Steering Committee, the Director, or the faculty as a whole.

A member of the Steering Committee shall normally serve as convener of the faculty involved in each field for these purposes.

7. Amendments to these Principles of Governance may be proposed by any member of the faculty or by the Steering Committee. Any proposed amendment must be distributed in writing to all members of the faculty at least seven days prior to the meeting at which it is to be considered. In order to pass, an amendment must receive the support of a majority of the members of the faculty who are based in the Department of Religious Studies and a majority of the members of the faculty who are based in Perkins School of Theology.

Adopted by the faculty of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies, May 8, 2019

The Degree Programs

Degree of Master of Arts: The requirements for the degree of Master of Arts are the following:

1. satisfactory completion of thirty credit hours of approved course work, including the four courses of the Core Seminar in Religious Studies: RELI 6301, The Philosophical Study of Religion; RELI 6302, Approaches to Asian Religions; RELI 6303, History, Theory, and Method in Religious Studies; and RELI 6304, Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion;
2. passing an examination in an approved foreign language;
3. satisfactory completion of a master's thesis on an approved topic in one of the six fields of study.

The student is encouraged to develop an area of concentration in his or her eighteen hours of undesignated course work. A maximum of six credit hours may be taken in Independent Study courses. Concentrations in areas of scholarship represented primarily in the Department of Religious Studies in Dedman College are especially welcome. Students whose main interests are in areas represented in the typical theological curriculum are advised to consider the Master of Theological Studies degree in Perkins School of Theology as an alternative to the Master of Arts degree in the Graduate Program in Religious Studies.

Each student will be assigned an advisor in his or her anticipated area of concentration, to aid in the development of a plan of study. A thesis proposal, endorsed by a three-member thesis committee, is to be submitted to the Steering Committee for its approval. Approval of the proposal, normally occurring early in the fall term of the second year of study, will signify admission to candidacy for the MA degree, provided that the student has satisfactorily completed twenty-four hours of approved course work and has passed the required foreign language examination.

The language examination must be taken during the August examination period at the beginning of the first year. Students who do not pass at that time will be allowed to retake the examination during the January examination period of the first year.

The program normally occupies two academic years: one year of full-time course work (twenty-four credit hours) and one year involving six hours of course work—the two remaining components of the Core Seminar, one each term—and the writing of a thesis. In accordance with university policy, the maximum time allowed for completion of the degree is six years. Ordinarily, transfer credit is not allowed toward the degree.

The MA degree is not normally awarded “in course” to PhD students. However, a PhD student who, owing to a change of plans or circumstances, wishes to receive the MA rather than proceed to the PhD may do so upon the Steering Committee’s approval of a plan for doing so. Such a plan would normally involve the completion of at least thirty hours of course work, the passing of at least one language examination, and the completion of either an approved MA thesis or the four comprehensive field examinations in the student’s PhD field.

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy: The requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy are the following:

1. satisfactory completion of forty-eight credit hours of approved course work, including the four courses of the Core Seminar in Religious Studies: RELI 6301, The Philosophical Study of Religion; RELI 6302, Approaches to Asian Religions; RELI 6303, History, Theory, and Method in Religious Studies; and RELI 6304, Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion;
2. passing examinations in two approved foreign languages (for students in the two fields of biblical studies, four languages are required: examinations must be passed in both Hebrew and Greek as well as in two additional languages);
3. passing four comprehensive field examinations on the subjects designated for examination in the student's field, each consisting of a six-hour written examination based on the bibliography agreed upon with the examiner and the second reader;
4. securing the Steering Committee's approval of a dissertation proposal endorsed by the student's dissertation advisor, two other members of the SMU faculty, and one reader from outside the SMU faculty (see the "Guidelines for Preparing the Dissertation Proposal" elsewhere in this handbook);
5. satisfactorily meeting the practice teaching requirement (see "Practice Teaching Requirement" elsewhere in this handbook);
6. satisfactorily completing the approved doctoral dissertation;
7. passing an oral examination covering the student's entire course of study as well as the dissertation.

A maximum of twelve credit hours of course work may be taken in independent study courses.

Special note: Students in the field of New Testament are required to take the following courses: (1) a course in Greek exegesis; (2) a course in Hebrew exegesis; (3) a course in Contemporary Methods of New Testament Interpretation; (4) a course in Hellenistic Judaism; (5) a course in the Greco-Roman Milieu; and (6) a course in Christianity in the Second Century. In addition, New Testament students are required to take at least one course in the Gospels and at least one course in Paul, requirements which may be satisfied by the regularly-offered Greek exegesis course and/or by directed or independent study courses. Students in New Testament should consult their advisors with regard to which courses in particular will satisfy the listed requirements.

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor in his or her anticipated field of study, to aid in the development of a plan of study (see "Guidelines for Preparing a Plan of Study" elsewhere in this handbook). The role of the faculty advisor is distinct from that of the dissertation advisor.

A student is admitted to candidacy for the PhD following the satisfactory completion of all required course work and all required examinations (language examinations and comprehensive field examinations) and following approval of the dissertation proposal, upon the review and approval of the Steering Committee.

The time limits within which the requirements for the degree must be satisfied are as follows:

1. The forty-eight credit hours of course work must be completed no later than the end of the second year.
2. At least one language examination must be taken during the August examination period at the beginning of the first year. Students who do not pass will be allowed to retake the examination during the January examination period of the first year.

3. Students in the two fields of biblical studies must take the second language examination no later than the June examination period of the first year; students who do not pass at that time will be allowed to retake the examination the following August. All other students must take the second language examination no later than August of the second year; students who do not pass at that time will be allowed to retake the examination in January of the second year. Students in biblical studies must pass their third and fourth language examinations no later than June of the third year.
4. The comprehensive field examinations must be completed no later than August of the third year.
5. The dissertation proposal must be submitted to the Steering Committee for approval no later than November 30 of the student's third year of study, or, in the case of students in biblical studies, no later than April 30 of the third year.
6. The practice teaching requirement will normally be completed during the third or fourth year and must be completed no later than the end of the fifth year.
7. The dissertation will normally be completed and the oral examination passed by the end of the fifth year. These requirements must be completed no later than five calendar years after the student's admission to candidacy.

Time Limits

Requirements for the MA Degree

	No later than
Pass language exam	August* of 1st year
Complete 30 hours of approved course work Core Seminar RELI 6301, RELI 6302, RELI 6303, RELI 6304 (12 hrs.) Elective course work (18 hrs.)	May of 2nd year (1st year 24 hrs., 2nd year 6 hrs.)
Complete thesis	April of 2nd year (Consult deadlines published by Office of Research & Graduate Studies.)

Requirements for the PhD Degree

	No later than
Pass 1st language exam	August* of 1st year
Submit Draft of Plan of Study	November 5 of 1st year
Submit Plan of Study	March 3 of 1st year
Pass 2nd language exam	August* of 2nd year (Biblical Studies: June of 1st year)
Complete 48 hours of approved course work Core Seminar RELI 6301, RELI 6302, RELI 6303, RELI 6304 (12 hrs.) Elective course work (36 hrs.)	May of 2nd year
Pass four comprehensive field exams	August* of 3rd year
Submit dissertation proposal	November 30 of 3rd year (Biblical Studies: April 30 of 3rd year)
Biblical Studies: Pass 3rd and 4th language exams	June of 3rd year
Be admitted to candidacy for degree	June of 3rd year
Practice teach one-semester course	May of 5th year
Final term of enrolled student status	Spring term of 5th year
Complete dissertation Pass oral examination covering dissertation and entire field of study	April of 5th year but no later than 5 calendar years after admission to candidacy

*August marks the **beginning** of the school year.

Policies on Time Limits: A student's continuation in a degree program from year to year is contingent upon his or her making satisfactory progress toward the degree. Each student's progress is renewed annually by the Steering Committee. The preceding page provides a chart indicating the normal expectations and time limits pertaining to the degree requirements for the MA and PhD degrees.

With regard to these time limits, the following policies apply.

1. *Language Examinations.* A student who fails a language examination on the first attempt is allowed to retake the exam. After two failed attempts, the student may retake the language exam (a) upon the recommendation of the language examiner and (b) with the approval of the Steering Committee. When grading a language exam, the language examiner should return the graded exam to the Program Coordinator within one month of the exam date.
2. *Comprehensive Field Examinations.* Comprehensive field examinations should be taken no earlier than the June exam period at the completion of the first year of study and not later than the August exam period at the beginning of the third year of study. A student who fails a comprehensive field examination is allowed one retake of the examination (a) upon the recommendation of the examiner and (b) with the approval of the Steering Committee. The retake must be scheduled for the next examination period. When grading a comprehensive field exam, the examiners should return the graded exam to the Program Coordinator within one month of the exam date.
3. *Plans of Study.* First drafts of plans of study are to be submitted no later than November 5 of the first year. Final plans of study are to be submitted no later than March 3 of the first year.
4. *Dissertation Proposals.* Dissertation proposals may be submitted later than the stipulated deadline only by petition to the Steering Committee and with the Steering Committee's approval of the student's petition.
5. *Completion of Course Work.* Admission to the Graduate Program in Religious Studies assumes a commitment to full-time study toward the anticipated degree. The expectation is that all students will complete twenty-four credit hours of course work during the first year; that MA students will complete their remaining six hours of course work, along with work on the thesis, in the second year; and that PhD students will complete their remaining twenty-four hours of course work in their second year. In certain cases, exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the Director, e.g., a case in which a course needed by a PhD student is only offered on a schedule that requires the student to take the course in the fall semester of the student's third year. In such a case, a corresponding postponement in the deadline for completion of comprehensive field examinations may also be appropriate.
6. *Leaves of Absence.* Leaves of absence for medical or other valid personal reasons must be approved by the Steering Committee. Time spent on an approved leave of absence from the GPRS will not be counted as part of the time limits.

Parental leave: The GPRS recognizes that many graduate students will be enrolled during prime childbearing years and welcomes the addition of children to our community. In accordance with the Dedman College parental leave policy, the GPRS adopts the following policies:

- The GPRS will not discriminate against any student or prospective student for pregnancy or becoming a parent.

- If requested, the GPRS will make accommodations to the course of study following the birth or adoption of a child. These accommodations might include allowing a student to take a leave of absence from the Program for at most one academic year (depending on complications and timing of the birth) and/or allowing a student to postpone exams (language and comprehensive) and other deadlines for the period of leave. In particular, the program will “stop the clock” during the period of leave.
- The student is not guaranteed stipend support for the period of leave. However, if a student chooses to take a period of leave, the Program will extend stipend support for one term past the term in which support would ordinarily have terminated. Health insurance benefits will be continued during the period of the leave, but for only one parental leave. A student on leave must verify his/her return date at least 6 months prior to re-entering the program in order to re-commence stipend support.

In special circumstances, exceptions to these policies may be granted upon petition to the Steering Committee and with the Steering Committee’s approval. In such cases, the student’s petition to the Steering Committee must give a detailed account of the circumstances that the student believes to justify the request for an exception.

Languages and Language Examinations

Language Examinations: The purpose of the language examinations is to ensure that the student is competent in reading and, when applicable, speaking the language in question and in using it in research. The student will be required to demonstrate competence in reading the various kinds of literature in the language in question that are relevant to scholarship in the student's area or field of religious studies. Thus, the language examiner is required to certify whether the student is or is not sufficiently competent in reading and, when applicable, speaking the language to be able to do research in the primary and/or secondary literature written in that language and, where applicable, to do primary ethnographic research in that language. A language examiner may follow up with the student after an exam about a question that may have arisen during the grading of the exam.

Requirement: Students in the MA degree program are required to pass an examination, oral and/or written, in one approved foreign language. Students in the PhD degree program in fields other than biblical studies are required to pass written examinations in two approved foreign languages; students in the PhD degree program in the two fields of biblical studies must pass written examinations in Hebrew and Greek as well as in two other approved foreign languages.

Time Limits: At least one language examination must be taken during the August examination period at the beginning of the first year. Students who do not pass will be allowed to retake the examination during the January examination period of the first year. PhD students in the two fields of biblical studies must take the second language examination no later than the June examination period of the first year; students who do not pass at that time will be allowed to retake the examination the following August. All other PhD students must take the second language examination no later than August of the second year; students who do not pass at that time will be allowed to retake the examination in January of the second year. Students in biblical studies must pass their third and fourth language examinations no later than June of the third year.

Approved Languages: The foreign languages approved for examination in both the MA and the PhD degree programs are French, Spanish, German, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. The GPRS has examiners for these languages. Consult the appended language exam guidelines for French, Spanish, German, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin for specific information about the standard components of each exam as well as about what is left to the discretion of the examiner. In all cases, students should consult the language examiners directly for further information about the language examinations and about appropriate preparation for them. The names of the examiners for the various approved foreign languages can be obtained from the Program Coordinator. If a student has taken a graduate-level exam in one of these languages through another university, the student can petition the Steering Committee by (1) describing the method of evaluation (e.g., oral exam, written exam, grading criteria) and (2) offering proof of competence (e.g., a letter of recommendation from the examiner or an official examination record).

Additional Languages: When a student's course of study makes it necessary or desirable that the student be examined in a foreign language not already approved, the student may petition the

Steering Committee for approval to be examined in that language. If a suitable examiner cannot be acquired by the GPRS, the student is responsible for providing evidence of competence sufficient to conduct research (e.g., a copy of a graded final exam in that language from an accredited course adequate for graduate research needs or a signed FLAS foreign language evaluation or an examination from another institution). The student must submit the petition to the Program Coordinator in writing no later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the examination period in which the student wishes to schedule the examination.

Administration of Language Examinations: “Request to Take a Language Examination” forms are available online or from the office of the Program Coordinator. The completed form, signed by the examiner, must be submitted to the Program Coordinator no later than thirty days prior to the beginning of the examination period in which the student wishes to schedule the examination. Language examinations are normally taken during one of the regularly scheduled examination periods of the academic year and (except for any oral component) are administered by the Program Coordinator.

Comprehensive Field Examinations

Comprehensive Field Examinations: The purpose of the comprehensive field examinations is to demonstrate the student's critical and constructive engagement with the sources and scholarship in that student's field, in such a way that the student is prepared to begin to participate in the student's scholarly guild. Students will assess and evaluate the past traditions and current trajectories of their scholarly field and will be prepared to begin teaching basic courses in that field and to contribute to scholarship in their field.

General: All comprehensive examinations are taken during the three two-week examination periods scheduled annually in August, January, and June. Examiners, as well as second readers, for the comprehensive field examinations are requested by the student, in consultation with her or his advisor; normally, these assignments are worked out at least tentatively during the preparation of the student's plan of study. Further information about examinations may be obtained from the several examiners, and it is with the examiners that students preparing for comprehensive field examinations should reach agreement on the topics, materials, and bibliographies to be covered by the examinations in their specific cases.

Comprehensive field examinations should be taken no earlier than the June exam period at the completion of the first year of study and not later than the August exam period at the beginning of the third year of study. All arrangements for taking the examinations must be made directly by the student with the appropriate examiner and second reader. Such arrangements include the student's formal request to take an examination, which must be signed by the examiner and second reader and submitted to the Program Coordinator in writing no later than thirty days prior to the beginning of the examination period in which the student wishes the examination to be scheduled. Copies of the form for making this request are available online or from the Program Coordinator.

Scheduling: A schedule of all examinations to be taken during each examination period is posted by the Program Coordinator some two weeks prior to the beginning of that period. All examinations are administered by the Program Coordinator, and students taking examinations should report to the office of the Program Coordinator on the day and at the hour indicated. Comprehensive field examinations are six-hour examinations and are scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the days fixed for the examinations.

Evaluation: The evaluation of a comprehensive field examination shall be based on the topics, materials, and bibliography agreed upon with the examiner and the second reader. The number grade assigned to a comprehensive field examination shall be the average of the overall scores assigned by the examiner and the second reader, as computed by the Director. When there is a 10% disparity between the overall scores of the two examiners, based on the higher grade, the Director of the GPRS will appoint a third reader to read the exam. This reader will be given a copy of the agreed-upon bibliography and will meet briefly with the two examiners to discuss the exam. The third reader's scores will be averaged together with the first two examiners' scores to determine the student's grade for the exam.

Practice Teaching Requirement

As one of the requirements for the PhD degree, all students must satisfactorily complete a one-semester course of practice teaching in religious studies or an approved alternative. This teaching will normally be completed during the third or fourth year and must be completed no later than the end of the fifth year. The initiative for making arrangements to fulfill the teaching requirement rests with the student, who should consult with his or her advisor at least one year in advance.

There are two ways to meet this requirement. In the first, the student teaches a course of her or his own design, planned with the advice and under the guidance of the student's advisor or other supervising professor. Ordinarily the teaching venue will be at Dedman College or Perkins School of Theology, but with the permission of the Director of the Program it may be elsewhere on the SMU campus or at another institution. Once the student and advisor have settled on a proposal, the GPRS form "Proposal for Fulfillment of Practice Teaching Requirement" should be submitted for the Director's approval. In 2019 the compensation, paid for by the GPRS, is \$2,500 if fulfilling this requirement at SMU.

Students wishing to teach a course in the Department of Religious Studies at Dedman College may request to teach one of three possible classes: Introduction to Western Religions, Religious Literacy, or Jews, Christians, and the Bible. The student should submit a request to the department Chair/Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) indicating when and which course he or she would like to teach. Once the Chair/DUS finds a teacher of record, the class is scheduled. For the fall this is done in January–February, and for the Spring it is done in August–September.

For any course to be offered at Perkins School of Theology, an official new course proposal must be approved by 1) the student's advisor, 2) the relevant Division of the Perkins faculty, and 3) the Perkins Faculty as a whole. Copies of the current Perkins new course proposal form may be obtained from the GPRS Program Coordinator. The student's advisor can give guidance on how this form is to be completed.

In the second, the student meets the teaching requirement by serving as a Teaching Assistant in a course taught at Dedman College, Perkins School of Theology or, with the permission of the Program Director, elsewhere on the SMU campus or at another institution. In this case, the student must be significantly engaged with the students taking the course in question, both in instruction and in the evaluation of their work. If it is to meet the teaching requirement, the Teaching Assistantship must provide the student with the opportunity to lecture (or make equivalent presentations) at least twice and regularly to lead discussion sections. In addition, the student must prepare a full syllabus for the course as if he or she were teaching it alone. In 2019 the compensation, paid for by the GPRS, is \$900 if fulfilling this requirement at SMU.

When the teaching requirement has been fulfilled, the student's advisor (or the supervising professor) will submit to the Director of the Program the GPRS form "Fulfillment of Practice Teaching Requirement" along with a copy of the syllabus that the student has prepared.

Note: The practice teaching requirement is a requirement separate from any teaching assistantships required, in accordance with a student's letter of admission, in return for stipendiary support. In some circumstances, students may arrange to complete the practice teaching requirement through one and the same class as that through which the student is already completing a required teaching assistant position. This requires special approval by the Director

and the level of work described above for the practice teaching requirement, and it requires that the student does not take any compensation for the course (as the student is already being compensated in her or his stipend, as articulated in the letter of admission).

Guidelines for Preparing a Plan of Study

Rationale for the Plan of Study: Each PhD student is to prepare a plan of study articulating how he or she is to satisfy program requirements. In developing this plan, the student should keep at least three things in mind: the comprehensive field examinations, the dissertation, and life beyond the PhD program. Together with the student's previous academic preparation and experience, the course work chosen should prepare the student successfully to complete the four comprehensive field examinations designated in his or her field. It should also provide some of the groundwork for the dissertation she or he expects to write. And it should aid in equipping the student for his or her anticipated future career, e.g., as a teacher and scholar in a college, university, or seminary setting. Although these three considerations are listed here in an order of obvious priority, all three should enter into one's planning from the outset. It is not unusual to discover close and mutually reinforcing relationships among all three.

Developing a Plan of Study: Each entering student will be assigned a faculty advisor in her or his anticipated field of study. (N.b. the faculty advisor may end up being the same person as the dissertation advisor, but these are two distinct roles and are not automatically the same person.) The student will work with this advisor in developing an overall plan of study and in deciding on the specific courses to be taken from semester to semester. The faculty advisor will communicate with the student prior to registration for the first term, in order to discuss the student's preparation, interests, and objectives and to advise the student as to appropriate course choices for the first semester of study. When a tentative plan for the first semester has been worked out, the student will confer with the Program Coordinator, who will aid in the registration process.

Early in the fall of the first year, each student will meet with his or her advisor for further discussion of a general plan of study for the remaining three semesters of course work. Advisor and student will identify likely course choices based upon available projections of course offerings in Perkins School of Theology and Dedman College and the schedule of directed studies already planned. They will also identify topics that may need to be addressed through independent studies, new directed studies, or other means. Using the Plan of Study form, students will submit a draft to the Program Coordinator by November 5. The coursework section of the draft should indicate (1) the course name and number of the regular courses the student wishes to take, (2) which courses are directed studies or independent studies and a proposed title for each, and (3) the instructor with whom each course will be taken.

Recall that, of the forty-eight credit hours of course work required for the PhD degree, twelve hours are devoted to the core curriculum, and a maximum of twelve hours may be in independent study. Typically, in each of the four semesters of course work, a PhD student will take three hours in the core seminar, six additional hours in graded courses (that is, in regular courses and/or directed study courses), and three hours in independent study.

Special note:

- Students in the field of New Testament are required to take the following courses: (1) a course in Greek exegesis; (2) a course in Hebrew exegesis; (3) a course in Contemporary Methods of New Testament Interpretation; (4) a course in Hellenistic Judaism; (5) a course in the Greco-Roman Milieu; and (6) a course in Christianity in the Second Century. In addition, New Testament students are required to take at least one course in the Gospels and at least

one course in Paul, requirements which may be satisfied by the regularly-offered Greek exegesis course and/or by directed or independent study courses. Students in New Testament should consult their advisors with regard to which courses in particular will satisfy the listed requirements.

Components: The plan of study is to include the following elements:

1. The Field of Study Summary:
 - a. A brief statement indicating which of the fields the student is pursuing, what particular focus within that field is guiding his or her plan of study, and—with whatever degree of specification seems appropriate at this point—what he or she anticipates as a topic or problem area for the dissertation. (One might, for example, indicate The Christian Tradition as one's field; a particular era, region, or aspect of that tradition as one's focus within the field; and a still more specific figure, event, or issue as a likely dissertation subject. Or one might indicate Systematic Theology as one's field; identify a particular doctrinal locus or theological approach as one's focus; and offer a still more specific theological question or proposal as a likely dissertation subject.) Whatever is said at this point concerning the dissertation topic is not irrevocable.
 - b. A rationale for the courses proposed.
 - c. When and how the student intends to fulfill TA and RA requirements.
 - d. Ideas for fulfilling the practice teaching requirement.
 - e. An explanation of the timing of comprehensive exams and an indication of the ways in which these examinations are to be shaped, insofar as such shaping is called for in the examination protocols, in light of one's objectives. (For example, students in the field of The Christian Tradition are to specify a period of ecclesiastical history and the corresponding period in intellectual and cultural history, while students in the field of Religion and Culture are to specify an elective topic associated with the anticipated dissertation.)
 - f. A rationale for the selection of languages in which the student will be examined.
2. A listing of the four comprehensive field examinations to be taken, their primary and secondary readers, and the exam period (month and year) in which they will be taken. The student should indicate in some way which faculty members have already agreed to serve as examiners.
3. A listing of the two or four language examinations to be taken and the exam period (month and year) in which they will be taken.
4. A listing of the courses completed and underway in the first year and a projected program of study for the fall and spring of the second year. This listing should indicate (1) the course name and number of the regular courses the student wishes to take, (2) which courses are directed studies or independent studies and a proposed title for each, and (3) the instructor with whom each course will be taken.
5. Signatures by the student and the advisor.

Deadlines: The signed draft of the plan of study is due to the Program Coordinator by November 5 of the student's first year. The signed final plan of study is due to the Program Coordinator by March 3 of the student's first year.

Guidelines for Preparing the Dissertation Proposal

The purpose of the doctoral dissertation is to contribute to the ongoing discussion of the problem with which it deals in the relevant field of specialization. Accordingly, the dissertation proposal must be formulated in such a way as to make the student's accomplishment of this purpose within the specified time limits seem a reasonable objective. Specifically, the dissertation proposal must include the following four components:

1. a statement of the specific question or problem to be investigated;
2. a statement of the reasons that make an investigation of this question or problem important and desirable both for the ongoing scholarly discussion in the relevant field and for the student individually;
3. a self-assessment by the student of her or his qualifications, including competences in relevant foreign languages, to carry out the proposed investigations; and
4. either a bibliography of the primary and secondary literature basic to the proposed investigation or some other appropriate indication of the student's awareness of the bibliographic requirements of the investigation and of ways and means of meeting those requirements.

Excluding the bibliography, the dissertation proposal should be **five to ten typewritten pages (1500 to 3000 words) in length**.

Before submitting the dissertation proposal for approval, the student must secure its endorsement by the prospective dissertation advisor, by two additional members of the SMU faculty, and by one reader from outside the SMU faculty, all of whom are willing to work with the student in satisfying the two final requirements for the PhD degree (i.e., the completion of the dissertation and the oral examination). In effect, then, the Steering Committee's approval of the dissertation proposal constitutes, at the same time, its appointment of these persons to serve as the student's dissertation committee and as the examiners for the student's oral examination.

Once these endorsements have been secured, the completed proposal may be submitted to the faculty of the student's field for its review. The dissertation proposal must be submitted to the Steering Committee no later than November 30 of the student's third year of study, or, in the case of students in biblical studies, no later than April 30 of the third year. The student's dissertation advisor is expected to attend the Steering Committee meeting at which the student's proposal will be considered.

Special Note:

- In the fields of Systematic Theology and Religious Ethics, once the committee endorsements have been secured, the completed proposal must be submitted to the faculty of the student's field for an oral defense and, upon its recommendation, to the Steering Committee for approval.

Procedures for Preparing and Securing the Approval of the Dissertation and for the Oral Examination

Appointing the Dissertation Committee: The Steering Committee's approval of the student's dissertation proposal is, in effect, its appointment of the members of the student's dissertation committee. This committee consists of three SMU faculty members—the student's dissertation advisor, who will serve as chairperson, and two other members of the SMU faculty—and an outside reader. It is understood that, from this time on, it is this committee, and most particularly the chairperson, that has immediate supervisory responsibility for the completion of the dissertation, including preparing the dissertation, securing its approval, and conducting the oral examination thereon.

Preparing the Dissertation: It is up to the chairperson of the committee, in consultation with the student, to establish and follow procedures for preparing the dissertation as may seem appropriate. In other words, while the Steering Committee makes no regulation as to *what* these procedures should be, it does rule *that* definite procedures be established and followed and that, therefore, they be mutually understood by the chairperson and the student. One way of securing such understanding is for the chairperson to propose such procedures and to discuss them with the student until they can be agreed on and then to require that the student write up his or her understanding of them, giving a copy thereof to the chairperson.

Any student conducting human subjects research must be aware of and comply with the regulations set by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at SMU. Information about the IRB and its regulations can be obtained from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

The student should be aware of dissertation format requirements and dissertation-related graduation requirements and deadlines established by Dedman College. Copies of the current guidelines for preparation of dissertations are available from the Graduate Office of Dedman College.

Securing the Approval of the Dissertation: Securing the approval of the dissertation is regulated as follows. Every year, the official calendar of the Graduate Office of Dedman College specifies two dates toward the end of each semester that determine the schedule for the approval of dissertations and for oral examinations. The latter of these dates (a week or so prior to the official close of the semester) is the last day of oral/written examinations for students seeking degrees at the close of that semester. The earlier date (three weeks or so prior to the official end of the semester) is the last day to submit approved dissertations in final form to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and SMU Scholar. Therefore, while an approved dissertation in final form may be submitted to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at any time earlier in the semester, and while the oral examination on the dissertation may be held at any time after the dissertation has thus been submitted, these two dates set the ultimate possible limits for the schedule to be followed by both the student and the chairperson and the other members of the dissertation committee.

Accordingly, prior to the first date specified, all of the following procedures must have already been completed: (1) the student must have submitted her or his completed dissertation to the chairperson and secured the chairperson's tentative approval of it; (2) the chairperson must have forwarded the tentatively approved dissertation to the other members of the committee for their reading and approval; (3) the other members of the committee must have read and approved the dissertation, with or without proposals for revision, and have reported accordingly directly to the chairperson; (4) the chairperson must have given final approval of the dissertation, having first seen to it that the student has made any and all proposed revisions that, in discussion with the other members of the committee, have been required; and (5) the student must have prepared the final copy of the approved dissertation for submission to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Ordinarily, therefore, the chairperson should require that the student submit his or her completed dissertation early enough to have secured the chairperson's tentative approval by no later than sixty days prior to the official close of the semester. This allows some four to five weeks for the other members of the committee to read and approve the dissertation and for the student to prepare the final copies of the approved dissertation for submission to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Oral examination: It is the responsibility of the chairperson to schedule the oral examination with the Program Coordinator. Only after the approved dissertation has thus been submitted can the oral examination of the student on the dissertation be held—although it must be held, naturally, on or before the last day for such examinations specified in the calendar of Dedman College if the student expects to take her or his degree at the close of that semester. Since the dissertation by that time has already been read and approved not only by the chairperson but also by the other members of the committee, whose proposals for revision, if any, will already have been taken into account, the purpose of the oral examination is in no way to propose or insist on revisions in the dissertation. Its purpose, rather, is to require the student to defend the thesis, and thus the supporting argument, of his or her completed and approved dissertation in face of the kind of criticism that may fairly be expected to be made of it by his or her scholarly peers. Consequently, the evaluation of the oral examination is distinct from the evaluation of the dissertation itself and is determined solely on the basis of the student's success or resourcefulness in defending the thesis and supporting argument of his or her dissertation.

Policy on the Limits of Faculty Responsibility

The official policy of the Program is that members of the faculty have no responsibilities to students during the summer and during a period of research leave. Therefore, neither the Director of the Program nor its students may properly expect faculty members to continue their instructional, advisory, or chairpersonal responsibilities for students during either the summer or a period of approved research leave.

Three further aspects of this policy about faculty responsibilities are equally important. First, faculty members may, by their own choice and at their own discretion, fulfill any function for students during either of these two periods, whether as instructor, advisor, or chairperson of a dissertation committee. This is a right to be exercised entirely at the faculty member's own option and by agreement with his or her students; it cannot, however, be assumed or expected by the Director of the Program or by the students concerned.

Second, in the case of an examiner or reader of a comprehensive or language exam during the June exam period: faculty members are still encouraged to return grades for the exam within one month to conform to Graduate Office expectations. Furthermore, a faculty member should not agree to be a reader on an exam for a student during the August exam period unless he or she is willing to be available, within reason, to correspond with the student about the exam during the summer months.

Third, in the case of a reader or chairperson of a student's dissertation committee who will be on approved research leave during the period when the student expects to complete the requirements for his or her degree, a few options are possible. First, the reader or the chairperson may willingly choose to fulfill their role during the summer or during the time of her or his research leave. Second, the reader or chairperson may request that the student delay her or his completion until after the reader or chairperson's return from leave. Finally, if neither of these options are realistically available, the student may petition the Director to appoint another reader or chairperson to serve on the dissertation committee.

Evaluations, Grades, and Necessary Conditions for Continuing in Study

Evaluations: A student's performance in both the MA and the PhD degree programs is evaluated, first of all, by the grading procedures in force in her or his courses. In addition, there are evaluations of the student's performance on language examination(s) and evaluations of the student's performance on his or her MA thesis or PhD dissertation. In the case of a PhD, the student is also evaluated on written comprehensive examinations, the oral dissertation examination, and the one-semester course of required practice teaching. The purpose of each of these evaluations is to assess the student's operational competence as a scholar-teacher in religious studies.

Grades: In accordance with the general regulations of Dedman College, all evaluations of a student's course work appear on his or her permanent academic record as letter grades (including pluses and/or minuses) or, in the case of independent studies, as pass/fail. But these letter grades are in many if not most cases merely a way of transcribing what are originally calculated as number grades, and number grades do, in fact, provide the currency for evaluations of the student's performance on language examinations as well as on written comprehensive examinations. While the number grades are converted to letter grades for coursework, the number grades assigned to language and written comprehensive examinations are converted to a third system on the student's placement dossier. This system employs the four grades of "Honors," "High Pass," "Pass," and "Fail." The only grades assigned to the PhD dissertation and oral dissertation examination are according to this third system. The following are the equivalences that are understood to obtain between these three systems of variously expressing or recording evaluations:

92-100	A	Honors
90-91 87-89	A- B+	High Pass
82-86 80-81	B B-	Pass
77-79 72-76 70-71	C+ C C-	Fail

Necessary Conditions for Continuing in Study: Generally speaking, the necessary conditions for a student's continuing in study are two: (1) securing a grade of Pass or better (= B- or better = 80 or better) on all evaluations of her or his performance in courses attempted or in satisfying any other degree program requirement and (2) satisfying all such requirements within the normal time limits specified for doing so. Failure to fulfill either of these conditions is reason enough for a student not to be continued in study, although in the event of such failure the student will not be discontinued automatically or without formal notification from the Director of the Program.

Review of Student Progress: Each student's progress in study is reviewed annually by the Steering Committee. In a case in which there is insufficient evidence of satisfactory progress toward the degree, the Steering Committee may decide, in consultation with relevant members of the faculty, (1) to discontinue the student from the program, (2) to allow the student to continue under certain specified conditions, or (3) to recommend to the student a change of degree program.

Policy on Student Academic Responsibility

Academic Honesty and Dishonesty: Students in the GPRS are expected to uphold the SMU Honor Code and are under the authority of the Constitution of the Honor Council of Southern Methodist University (available on the SMU website).

It should also be noted that graduate students serving in any instructional capacity at Southern Methodist University are subject to the same standards of professional conduct as are binding on regular faculty members (see especially policies 6.1–6.3 in the University Policy Manual, <http://www.smu.edu/policy/>).

Administrative Procedures: The faculty of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies has established the following procedures to be followed in dealing with incidents of suspected academic dishonesty:

1. Should an instructor believe that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor will notify the Director in writing. The Director will then arrange as soon as possible a meeting with the student and the instructor. The Director will be present at this meeting. Should he or she wish, the student may also have another faculty member present. At the meeting, the instructor will present her or his concerns to the student. The student may then respond to those concerns. Following this, the instructor will consult in private with both the Director and the faculty member invited by the student (if a faculty member has been invited). If after consultation, the instructor still believes that academic dishonesty has taken place, he or she will assign an appropriate penalty. (The penalty can range from a failing grade on the assignment to a failing grade for the course.) Final authority for determining whether academic dishonesty has taken place and for the determination of the penalty rests solely with the instructor.

Following the meeting, the decision of the instructor and the nature of the penalty assigned by the instructor will be communicated in writing by the Director to the student, with a copy to the instructor. Following the meeting, the instructor will also prepare a written account of the student's academic dishonesty and the penalty. This account is to be placed in the student's academic file.

Should the instructor deem the student's academic dishonesty to be sufficiently grievous as to call into question that student's fitness to continue in the program, he or she may also request that the matter be referred to the Steering Committee, for consideration of whether the student should be dismissed from the Graduate Program (see section 6).

2. A student accused of academic dishonesty has the right to appeal the decision of the instructor. Her or his appeal as described here may concern only the determination of academic dishonesty, not the grade resulting from the dishonesty. (A student wishing to appeal a grade assigned by an instructor should follow the procedures described in section 7.)

Two levels of appeal are possible.

- a. The student may appeal, first, to the Steering Committee. Should the student wish to appeal, he or she will inform the Director within two weeks of receiving the letter described above. The Director should as soon as possible arrange for a special meeting of the Steering Committee, in executive session. Relevant documentation will be provided to all the members of the Steering Committee in advance of the meeting. Relevant documentation includes (i) the assignment deemed by the instructor to be academically dishonest, (ii) any supporting documentation the instructor deems necessary to establish academic dishonesty (e.g., photocopies of books plagiarized or websites copied), (iii) the written statement which the instructor placed in the student's file following the meeting mentioned above, and (iv) a written statement from the student. The Steering Committee will consider the written documentation and then consult with both the student and instructor, either separately or together, at the committee's discretion. Following the examination of the evidence, the committee is required to vote as to the question of whether the student has committed an act of academic dishonesty. A majority vote will be decisive.
 - b. Should the student wish to pursue the matter further, he or she may next appeal the decision reached through the Steering Committee to the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies. All written documentation considered by the Steering Committee, as well as the minutes of its meeting, will be provided to the Dean's office. The Dean's office will be responsible for determining further procedures to be followed for review of the appeal.
3. When an instructor or other concerned party (e.g., the Director of Bridwell Library) believes that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty in a context other than course work (for example, in a comprehensive field examination or dissertation, or in the case of theft or destruction of library materials), the procedures described in section 1 and 2 will be followed.
4. Upon a second determination of academic dishonesty, the matter shall be referred to the Steering Committee for consideration of whether the student should be dismissed from the Graduate Program (see section 6).
5. Should the penalty for an act of academic dishonesty result in a student's being unable to fulfill the requirements for the Graduate Program or to miss deadlines for meeting those requirements, the Director will describe to the Steering Committee how the penalty assigned by the instructor affects the student's progress. The Steering Committee will then need to consider whether the student should be allowed to continue in the program, and if so, under what conditions (see section 6).
6. If the Steering Committee is called on to determine whether the student should be allowed to continue in the program, the Director should as soon as possible arrange for a special meeting of the Steering Committee, in executive session. Relevant documentation will be provided to all the members of the Steering Committee in advance of the meeting. Relevant documentation includes (i) the assignment deemed by the instructor to be academically dishonest, (ii) any supporting documentation the instructor deems necessary to establish academic dishonesty (e.g., photocopies of books plagiarized or websites copied), (iii) the written statement which the instructor placed in the student's file following the meeting mentioned above, and (iv) a written statement from the student. If this is the second instance of academic dishonesty, the instructor's letter describing the first instance should also be included. The Steering Committee will consider the written documentation and then consult with both the student and instructor or instructors (if this is the second instance), either separately or together, at the committee's discretion. Following the examination of the

- evidence, the committee is required to vote as to the question of whether the student should be allowed to continue in the program. A majority vote will be decisive.
7. The award of a grade is a matter solely within the academic discretion of the faculty member. A student who wishes to appeal an assigned grade must first discuss the matter with the faculty member who awarded the grade. If the faculty member decides not to seek a grade change, the student may petition the Director of the GPRS for a review of the faculty member's decision. The Director is not authorized to change a grade, even with the consent of the faculty member who awarded it. If, after discussion of the matter with the Director, the faculty member decides to seek a grade change, he or she should follow standard procedures for doing so. The Director will then report the faculty member's decision to the student. If, after discussion of the matter with the Director, the faculty member decides not to pursue a grade change, the student may petition the Dean of Graduate Studies for a review of the faculty member's decision. The Dean may proceed as he or she deems appropriate. By university policy, final authority in the determination of grades rests with the instructor.

Adopted by the GPRS Faculty, May 8, 2019

Descriptions of Language Examinations

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE FRENCH EXAM

The study of languages is considered an integral part of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies at SMU. The examination in French is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to use academic materials written in French effectively for scholarly research. The examination requires the translation into English of passages from recent French scholarly publications in the field of theological and religious studies.

The examination will consist of two sections, the first to be completed in one hour and the second in one hour and a half:

- (A) The first will be the translation into English of a passage in French to be selected from a longer work chosen in advance* for preparatory study. This portion of the examination is to be written *without* the use of a dictionary.
- (B) The second will be a sight translation into English of a passage to be given at the time of the examination. The use of a dictionary *will* be permitted during this hour. The length of the text may vary but will normally be limited to one or two book pages at the most.

In evaluating the translations, comprehension and accuracy will be given greater weight than quantity, although, of course, a reasonable amount of material should be translated to demonstrate that research could be done effectively using the French language.

Students should see their examiners for recommendations of books to help prepare for the exam.

*Each student should select an item of scholarly work—a journal article or book chapter—written in French and submit this proposed selection to the examiner for approval prior to the examination. Students are encouraged to select a work in their own field of interest.

Revised spring semester 2018

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE GERMAN EXAM

The study of languages is considered an integral part of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies at SMU. The examination in German is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to use academic materials written in German effectively for scholarly research. The examination requires the translation into English of passages from recent German scholarly publications in the field of theological and religious studies.

The examination will consist of two sections, the first to be completed in one hour and the second in one hour and a half:

- (A) The first will be the translation into English of a passage in German to be selected from a longer work chosen in advance* for preparatory study. This portion of the examination is to be written *without* the use of a dictionary.
- (B) The second will be a sight translation into English of a passage to be given at the time of the examination. The use of a dictionary *will* be permitted during this hour. The length of the text may vary but will normally be limited to one or two book pages at the most.

In evaluating the translations, comprehension and accuracy will be given greater weight than quantity, although, of course, a reasonable amount of material should be translated to demonstrate that research could be done effectively using the German language.

Students should see their examiners for recommendations of books to help prepare for the exam.

*Each student should select an item of scholarly work—a journal article or book chapter—written in German and submit this proposed selection to the examiner for approval prior to the examination. Students are encouraged to select a work in their own field of interest.

Revised spring semester 2018

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE LATIN EXAM

The Latin exam falls into two parts, the first an hour in length and the second an hour and a half. The first part, for which no dictionary is allowed, requires translation of a selection from a previously prepared text; the other, for which a dictionary is allowed, requires “sight” translation of an unprepared text of equal or lesser difficulty. The prepared text is selected in advance, in consultation with the examiner, in the light of the student’s particular interests within his or her field.

Revised spring semester 2018

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE SPANISH EXAM

The study of languages is considered an integral part of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies at SMU. The examination in Spanish is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to use academic materials written in Spanish effectively for scholarly research. The examination requires the translation into English of passages from recent Spanish scholarly publications in the field of theological and religious studies.

The examination will consist of two sections, the first to be completed in one hour and the second in one hour and a half:

- (A) The first will be the translation into English of a passage in Spanish to be selected from a longer work chosen in advance* for preparatory study. This portion of the examination is to be written *without* the use of a dictionary.
- (B) The second will be a sight translation into English of a passage to be given at the time of the examination. The use of a dictionary *will* be permitted during this hour. The length of the text may vary but will normally be limited to one or two book pages at the most.

In evaluating the translations, comprehension and accuracy will be given greater weight than quantity, although, of course, a reasonable amount of material should be translated to demonstrate that research could be done effectively using the Spanish language.

Students should see their examiners for recommendations of books to help prepare for the exam.

*Each student should select an item of scholarly work—a journal article or book chapter—written in Spanish and submit this proposed selection to the examiner for approval prior to the examination. Students are encouraged to select a work in their own field of interest.

Revised spring semester 2018

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE GREEK EXAM FOR STUDENTS IN THE FIELD OF NEW TESTAMENT

General

Three hours will be allowed for the examination, and it will consist of two parts. In the first part, the student will translate two or three passages from the New Testament. In the second part, the student will translate one or more passages from non-New Testament sources. The student will *not* be permitted to use a computer, a lexicon, or any other tool during either part of the examination.

Part I

The student will translate two or three passages of different levels of difficulty selected from the New Testament. The passages may come from anywhere in the New Testament and will not be known to the student in advance. In addition, the student will identify a few specified constructions and forms in the passages.

Part II

The student will be asked to translate one or more passages selected from non-New Testament Greek texts that he or she has prepared. It is the student's responsibility to ask the examiner which texts the passage(s) will come from well in advance of the exam. The texts to be prepared by the student will consist of 75 to 100 Loeb-size pages of non-New Testament Greek and will ordinarily be representative of at least two different corpora (e.g., LXX and Apostolic Fathers; Josephus and Justin).

Evaluation

In assessing the examination, the two parts will be given about equal weight. A numerical grade will be turned in to the GPRS office, but the student's permanent record will show nothing other than "Pass" when that has been achieved. (In the GPRS, 80 is the minimum passing grade.)

Approved: November 13, 2017

M. Chancey, J. Clark-Soles, A. Smith, S. Wan

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE GREEK EXAM FOR STUDENTS IN FIELDS OTHER THAN NEW TESTAMENT

General

Two hours will be allowed for the examination, and it will consist of two parts, the time to be divided about equally. In the first part, the student will translate two or three passages from the New Testament. In the second part, the student will translate one or more selections from a non-New Testament Greek text that he or she has prepared, with the aid of a lexicon. Computers or other electronic aids may not be used in any portion of the exam.

Part I

The student will translate—without the aid of a lexicon—two or three passages of different levels of difficulty from pre-assigned books of the New Testament. It is the student's responsibility to ask the examiner, well in advance of the exam, the biblical books from which the passages will be selected. Ordinarily the prepared materials will include (a) the Gospel of Luke; (b) one of the longer Pauline letters (e.g., Romans or 1 Corinthians); and (c) another New Testament book of approximately the same length and difficulty as Ephesians or 1 Peter. While the student will know the books from which the passages come, the student will not know the exact passages themselves in advance.

Part II

The student will translate—with the aid of a lexicon—one or more selections from a non-New Testament Greek text that he or she has prepared. It is the student's responsibility to ask the examiner which text the passage(s) will come from well in advance of the exam. The texts to be prepared by the student should consist of 50 to 75 Loeb-size pages of non-New Testament Greek. The use of an appropriate lexicon will be allowed: *A Lexicon Abridged from Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, [various printings]).

Evaluation

In assessing the examination, the two parts will be given about equal weight. A numerical grade will be turned in to the GPRS office, but the student's permanent record will show nothing other than "Pass" when that has been achieved. (In the GPRS, 80 is the minimum passing grade.)

Approved: November 13, 2017

M. Chancey, J. Clark-Soles, A. Smith, S. Wan

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE HEBREW/ARAMAIC EXAM FOR STUDENTS IN HEBREW BIBLE

General

Three hours will be allowed for the examination, and it will consist of two parts. In the first part, the student will translate three narrative passages from the Bible, two in Hebrew and one in Aramaic, without the aid of a lexicon. In the second part, the student will translate two or more selections of poetry, at least one from the Latter Prophets and at least one from elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, with the aid of a lexicon. Computers or other electronic aids may not be used in any portion of the exam.

In preparation, the student should know all Hebrew vocabulary words occurring 10 or more times in the Bible—as well as all Aramaic vocabulary—as these are listed in George Landes, *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary: Learning Words by Frequency and Cognate* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature: 2001), and in Franz Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983). The student should also be familiar with the primary syntactical elements of Biblical Hebrew, as they are listed and explained in Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

If the first language of the student is not English, a dictionary of the student's first language may be used.

Part I

- A. The student will translate—without the aid of a lexicon—two narrative passages in Hebrew selected from any portion of the Bible. These will be chosen by the examiner and will not be known to the student in advance. In addition, the student will identify a few specified constructions and forms in the passages.
- B. The student will translate—without the aid of a lexicon—one passage in Aramaic selected from the relevant portions of the Bible (Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12-26; Daniel 2:4–7:28). The passage will be chosen by the examiner and will not be known to the student in advance.

Part II

- A. The student will translate—*with* the aid of a lexicon—one or two poetic passages from the Latter Prophets. The particular selection(s) will be made by the examiner and will not be known to the student in advance.
- B. The student will translate—*with* the aid of a lexicon—one or two poetic passages from the Hebrew Bible occurring *outside* the Latter Prophets. The particular selection(s) will be made by the examiner and will not be known to the student in advance.

For this part, the student will be allowed the use of one appropriate printed lexicon—

- Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*;
- Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, M. E. J. Richardson. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Unabridged 2-Volume Study Edition).

Evaluation

In assessing the examination, the various passages will be given about equal weight. A numerical grade will be turned in to the GPRS office, but the student's permanent record will show nothing other than "Pass" when that has been achieved. (In GPRS, 80 is the minimum passing grade.)

Approved: November 13, 2017 R. Heller, S. Frolov, J. Levison, S. Scholz,

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE HEBREW EXAM FOR STUDENTS IN FIELDS OTHER THAN HEBREW BIBLE

General

Two hours will be allowed for the examination, and it will consist of two parts, the time to be divided about equally. In the first part, the student will translate a narrative passage from a pre-assigned book from either the Torah or Former Prophets. In the second part, the student will translate a selection of poetry, usually a psalm or portion of a psalm, with the aid of a lexicon. Computers or other electronic aids may not be used in any portion of the exam.

In preparation, the student should know all Hebrew vocabulary words occurring 25 or more times in the Bible as these are listed in George Landes, *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary: Learning Words by Frequency and Cognate* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature: 2001).

If the first language of the student is not English, a dictionary of the student's first language may be used.

Part I

The student will translate—without the aid of a lexicon—one narrative passage selected from a pre-assigned book from either the Torah or Former Prophets. It is the student's responsibility to ask the examiner, well in advance of the exam, the biblical book from which the passage will be selected. While the student will know the book from which the passages come, the student will not know the exact passages themselves in advance.

Part II

The student will translate—with the aid of a lexicon—one or more selections from the book of Psalms. The particular selection(s) will be made by the examiner and will not be known to the student in advance. The student will be allowed the use of an appropriate lexicon—

- Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*;
- Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, M. E. J. Richardson. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Unabridged 2-Volume Study Edition).

Evaluation

In assessing the examination, the two parts will be given about equal weight. A numerical grade will be turned in to the GPRS office, but the student's permanent record will show nothing other than "Pass" when that has been achieved. (In GPRS, 80 is the minimum passing grade.)

Approved: November 13, 2017 R. Heller, S. Scholz, J. Levison, S. Frolov

Constitution of the GPRS Student Organization

CONSTITUTION OF THE
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES
STUDENT ORGANIZATION

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

PREAMBLE

We, the students of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies (GPRS) at Southern Methodist University, do hereby establish a Student Organization to assist students in completing the program and to facilitate relationships with other entities, organizations and communities.

ARTICLE I: Name of the organization

The proposed organization is to be known as the GPRS Student Organization (GSO).

ARTICLE II: Affiliation with other groups

- The GSO will be affiliated with the following groups:
- GPRS Steering Committee (by Student Representatives on the Steering Committee)
- The Perkins Student Association (PSA) (by PSA Liaison)
- Graduate Student Association (GSA) (by GSA Representative)

ARTICLE III: Purpose/main function of the organization

The purposes of the GSO are as follows:

- Facilitate communication among the GPRS students and between students and the GPRS Steering Committee and faculty;
- Assist students in progressing through the program;
- Act as a medium for the exchange of ideas and involvement in relevant concern within the SMU and Perkins communities, the Dallas community, our larger academic communities, and the global community.

ARTICLE IV: Membership

The membership of the GSO shall consist of all students officially enrolled in the GPRS of Southern Methodist University.

ARTICLE V: Officers and Liaisons

The leadership of the GSO shall consist of the GSO Officers' Council, nominated by GSO faculty or members, from the floor or by prior announcement, and elected by a majority of votes of those voting during the Spring annual general meeting (with the exception of the First Year Representative). The offices of the GSO Council include President, Community Life Coordinator, Colloquy Chair, Professional Development Coordinator, Representatives to the Steering Committee (2), GSA Representative, and the First Year Representative. The First Year Representative will be elected from the new cohort of incoming GSO members, before the October that follows the annual general meeting. In addition, the GSO will choose a PSA Liaison, nominated by GSO faculty or members, from the floor or by prior announcement, and elected by a majority of votes of those voting during the annual general meeting at the end of the Spring Semester. Terms of office and election procedures are described in the bylaws (see below, Article XI, Section C). GSO members may abstain from voting if they choose.

ARTICLE VI: Advisor

The GSO Advisor role will be filled by – and coterminous with – the GPRS Director. Alternatively, the GPRS student body can nominate another GPRS faculty member; if willing to serve in the capacity of GSO Advisor, this faculty member can be elected to the role by a simple majority vote at the fall meeting. If the role of GSO Advisor is filled by a faculty member other than the GPRS Director, the Advisor will serve a two-year renewable term.

ARTICLE VII: Meetings

One annual general meeting of the GSO is scheduled each year (at the end of the Spring Semester and no later than the end of May). Elections for GSO Officers and the PSA Liaison, with the exception of the First-Year Representative, shall be held at the Spring annual general meeting. Other regular meetings and brown-bag seminars are scheduled on an ad-hoc basis and may be called by GSO members or faculty.

ARTICLE VIII: Quorum

Half of the GSO members must be present at any meeting in which an election, referendum, or other important item of official GSO business is to be transacted.

ARTICLE IX: Referendum and recall procedures

Referenda, including special elections and officer or advisor recalls, must be announced at least one week prior to a meeting of the GSO. Upon approval of two-thirds of the members of the GSO attending the meeting, the referendum will pass.

ARTICLE X: Ratification and Amendments

The need for ratification of or amendments to this constitution will be presented and voted upon in an official meeting of the GSO, announced with at least one week's notice. This constitution or amendments to it shall be distributed by e-mail one week prior to the meeting. Upon approval of two-thirds of the members of the GSO attending the meeting, the ratification of or amendments to the constitution will pass

ARTICLE XI: Bylaws

Section A. All GPRS students shall become members of the GSO upon registration in the program and shall remain members until no longer registered in the program.

Section B. There are no dues attendant on membership in the GSO.

Section C. GSO Council offices are constituted as follows:

- **President** – The President will:
 - Call all meetings of the GSO and of the GSO Officers’ Council
 - Preside at GSO meetings and GSO Officers’ Council meetings
 - Represent the GSO at meetings with other groups outside the GSO, or appoint, with the approval of the membership or of the GSO Officers’ Council, representatives to such meetings
 - Organize incoming student move-in assistance and spouse/partner orientation.
 - Term: one year, renewable. Elected at the Spring annual general meeting

- **Representatives to the GPRS Steering Committee (2)** – The Representative to the Steering Committee will:
 - Facilitate communication to/from students and Steering Committee
 - Attend Steering Committee meetings and participate in the business of the GPRS Steering Committee
 - Term: two years, renewable once. Terms renewed in alternate-year rotation. Elected at the Spring annual general meeting.

- **Community Life Coordinator** – The Community Life Coordinator will:
 - Coordinate the organization of all GPRS social events
 - Organize the GSO student mentoring program
 - Term: one year, renewable. Elected at the Spring annual general meeting

- **Colloquy Chair** – The Colloquy Chair will:
 - Organize all student colloquies with a minimum of two per academic year
 - Term: one year, renewable. Elected at the Spring annual general meeting

- **Professional Development Coordinator** – The Professional Development Coordinator will:
 - Coordinate professional development activities and hold profession development meetings with a minimum of two per academic year
 - Term: one year, renewable. Elected at the Spring annual general meeting

- **GSA Representative** – The GSA Representative will:
 - Serve as the GSO’s representative on GSA.
 - Term: one year, renewable. Elected at the Spring annual general meeting

- **The First Year Representation** – The First Year Representative will:
 - Facilitate communication between the incoming cohort of GSO members and the GSO Officers’ Council

- Term: one year, nonrenewable. Must be elected by the October that follows the Spring annual general meeting

Section D. The GSO Liaisons are constituted as follows:

- **PSA Liaison** – The PSA Liaison will:
 - Serve as the GSO’s representative on the PSA.
 - Term: one year, renewable. Elected at the Spring annual general meeting

Section E: A GSO Officers’ Council quorum shall be constituted by the presence of at least three of the members at the meeting. The GSO President shall bear the responsibility of preparing and ordering the agenda for each meeting of the GSO Officers’ Council. At such time as the GSO may obtain discretionary funds, the GSO Officers’ Council will be responsible for developing a budget for the upcoming academic year and presenting it to the GSO at the Spring meeting. The outgoing GSO Officers’ Council shall be responsible for briefing the incoming Officers’ Council on their respective duties.

Section F: Standing or special committees can be formed at the request of any member of the GSO or GPRS faculty. Standing committees require the approval of a simple majority of the GSO at a regularly called meeting. Special committees can be formed by the approval of a simple majority of the GSO at a regularly called meeting, or by the request of the GSO Advisor or GSO President. However, special committees cannot commit the GSO or the GPRS to any binding decision or action or commit funds or student/faculty time without following appropriate procedures, e.g., the referenda guidelines in Article IX.

Section G: Regularly called meetings will follow an agenda developed by the GSO Council working in conjunction with the GPRS Advisor and/or Director. GSO members can recommend agenda items to the GSO Council for consideration and possible inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting. Agenda will typically address old business, new business and business arising from floor announcements, requests and questions

Section H: Robert’s Rules of Order will provide a framework for the GSO’s functioning, though parliamentary procedure is not a requirement for all meetings, particularly those that are primarily for the providence of information as opposed to the conduct of business or elections

Section I: See Articles IX and X for information about amendment procedures.

Revised, Spring 2014