The Bible area seeks to understand and interpret the Jewish and Christian scriptures and related texts in their historical and cultural settings as well as in their subsequent roles as canonical texts for Judaism and Christianity. Contributing to these goals are four distinct areas of research: the historical contexts of these scriptures from ancient Israel to the Roman empire, the history and transmission of biblical and post-biblical literature, the history and methods of exegesis, and biblical and post-biblical theology.

Students in the doctoral program in the Bible area elect one of four possible concentrations for structuring their program and focusing their research agenda: Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East; Hebrew Bible and Early Jewish Literature; Biblical Studies: Jewish and Christian Bible; or New Testament and Early Christian Literature.

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