

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
Divinity School

Doctoral Student Handbook
September 2020

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PH.D. PROGRAM

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program is a rigorous, interdisciplinary course of study that prepares students for careers in research, teaching, and publicly-engaged leadership. Doctoral students conduct original and advanced research in pursuit of expert knowledge about the human phenomenon of religion as currently organized in one of eleven Areas of Study (Anthropology and Sociology of Religion; Bible; History of Christianity; History of Judaism; History of Religions; Islamic Studies; Philosophy of Religions; Religions in America; Religion, Literature, and Visual Culture; Religious Ethics; and Theology), or through a multidisciplinary course of study designed by the student in consultation with faculty. Through the program and its distinctive interdisciplinary rigor, students develop a sophisticated grasp of methods and theories in a chosen Area, gain a broad understanding of religion as a phenomenon that exceeds any single approach or disciplinary orientation, and join others in the creation of new knowledge.

As a community of scholars, the Ph.D. program works in a collaborative nature both within Areas of study and between them as well as with colleagues across and beyond the University. This collaborative work continues in the classroom that offers an invaluable, non-tutorial model of education. In this way, Ph.D. students along with faculty carry on the work of scholarship in ways that forge collegueship between students and among students and faculty.

KEY COMPETENCIES

Key competencies developed by doctoral students at the Divinity School can be roughly divided into four categories as indicated below. The first two categories are, usually, achieved during the period of coursework while the latter two categories relate more clearly to research and teaching. That being said, this is a distinction and not a separation, and, therefore, a student is, in fact, developing all of these competencies throughout each step of the course of study. These categories should guide yearly evaluations of student progress.

- A. Basic Knowledge and Competence in the Study of Religion and a Field of Study.
 1. Required knowledge of the field and the study of religion, including issues of method and theory.
 2. Range of knowledge in primary sources in a field of study and the academic study of religion, and the ability and sensitivity to critically analyze and interpret this material.
 3. Linguistic competencies.
 4. Effectiveness in academic writing, including the formulation of arguments, marshaling of evidence, and clarity of method.
 5. The power of oral self-expression and communication.

- B. Methodological Sophistication in the Study of Religion and Field of Study.
 1. Grasp of the major methods for the study of religion as a human phenomenon.
 2. The critical sensibility and capacity to analyze secondary literature in the student's field of study and about the study of religion.
 3. The ability to design, undertake, and complete a research project in a timely and professional fashion.

- C. Originality of Research within a Field of Study and Defining an Intellectual Identity.
 1. Disciplinary self-understanding as a scholar of religion and within a specialty. A scholar must be able to situate her or his work and research within the debates found in a field about method and content. This self-understanding is crucial for one's intellectual identity and originality in a field of inquiry.

2. Originality of research contribution as recognized within one's field of study.
- D. Capacity for Engagement about the Study of Religion and one's own research.
1. The Divinity School has always been committed to being a "teacher of teachers." Given this, a key competency is the ability to teach at various levels of instruction and in different institutional contexts.
 2. The Divinity School has long been engaged with issues of the public understanding of religion, acknowledging the various publics (e.g., academic, religious, political, civil) in which expressions of religion are to be found. Given this commitment to public discourse and understanding, a crucial competency is the ability to translate one's scholarly work for the sake of intelligent and informed discussion of religion in broader publics.

Once again, the above categories of competencies are not strictly delineated; they are in fact deeply interrelated facets of our scholarly work.

ADHERANCE TO UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Ph.D. students are held to all policies of the University of Chicago and the Divinity School. The Student Manual is the official statement of University policies and regulations and expected standards of student conduct that are applicable to all students. Any student conduct, on or off campus, of individuals or groups, that threatens or violates this commitment may become a matter for action within the University's system of student discipline. The Divinity School policies and procedures are contained in the Announcements. Students should read and become familiar with the expectations outlined in the Student Manual and Announcements available at <https://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/> and <http://divinityannouncements.uchicago.edu/> respectively.

MAXIMUM REGISTRATION

The Divinity School has a maximum registration for all Ph.D. students.

Students that matriculated before Summer 2016 have twelve (12) years to complete the program. This is inclusive of all leaves of absences. In other words, if one takes a leave of absence, the 12-year clock does not stop.

Students that matriculated during or after Summer 2016 but before Summer 2021 have nine (9) years of enrollment to complete the program. If one takes a leave of absence, the 9-year clock stops until one resumes enrollment in the program.

Students that matriculate into the Ph.D. program in Summer 2021 or later will have seven (7) years of enrollment to complete the program. If a student takes a leave of absence, the 7-year clock stops until the student resumes enrollment in the program. Students with a 7-year maximum registration may petition for additional time in the program, up to one year, if they receive external funding. These petitions are typically for additional language study or fieldwork, and the external funding must award at least two-thirds of the annual living stipend for doctoral students, currently \$31,000, i.e. a student must currently secure an award of \$20,667 to be eligible for such a petition. Students must submit a Minor Petition to the Committee on Degrees, explained below, to petition for a maximum registration extension. The petition must include the external award letter and application materials for the award. It is recommended that students submit these petitions when receiving the external award.

If a student (who matriculated at any time) has exhausted the maximum registration time limit that applies to them, they will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

REQUIREMENTS

To earn a Ph.D. at the Divinity School eight requirements must be met: 1) coursework; 2) course of study petition; 3) second-year progress conference; 4) language requirement; 5) qualifying examinations; 6) pedagogical training plan (PTP) for students that matriculated in Summer 2016 or later; teaching assignments under the Graduate Aid Initiative (GAI) or pedagogical training plan (PTP) for students that matriculated before Summer 2016; 7) dissertation, including proposal and colloquium, midpoint review, and defense; and 8) yearly progress reviews

COURSEWORK

The Ph.D. at the University of Chicago Divinity School has a considerable duration and breadth as students explore the history, methods, theories, thinkers, and texts in an Area of Study in a minimum of two additional years of coursework beyond the masters-level. This coursework provides our graduates with a broad foundation in their Area of Study and related Areas as well as depth of knowledge in their research specialty. To these ends, students must meet the following requirements.

- A. Satisfactory completion (at least a B level) of at least twelve (12) courses with quality grades (not a pass/fail or audit) that are significant for their course of study during the first two years of their program, including four (4) quality grades by the beginning of Spring Quarter of the first year. Normally, Ph.D. students are enrolled in a minimum of two courses per quarter during the first two years.
 1. Note that the Divinity School modified its grading practices to allow students greater flexibility to deal with the circumstances of the health crisis for Spring Quarter 2020. Divinity School doctoral students were allowed to take any class offered by the Divinity School on a Pass/Fail basis in the Spring 2020 quarter, except those meeting any language requirements. Doctoral students that took courses on a pass/fail basis during Spring 2020 will remain in good academic standing, as long as all other milestones are met. Courses taken on a Pass/Fail basis during Spring 2020 will count toward the 12-quality grade course requirement for doctoral students. Hence, doctoral students will **not** have to take additional courses to make up for any courses taken on a Pass/Fail basis in the Spring 2020 quarter.
- B. Doctoral students may not take any courses that satisfy a language requirement on a Pass/Fail basis.
- C. One of the 12 courses mentioned above must be the required seminar in Methods and Theories in the Study of Religion for first-year doctoral students, normally offered in the Autumn Quarter.
- D. For students matriculating in Summer 2020 and after, no more than six of the twelve courses required in the first two years of the Ph.D. program can be language classes. Three of the nonlanguage classes should result in a significant piece of scholarly writing (at least 15 pages). Students still in the coursework phase of the program that matriculated in Summer 2019 or earlier are recommended, but not required, to follow these rules to better prepare for the 2nd year conference and qualifying exams.

COURSE OF STUDY PETITION

The Course of Study Petition is an outline of the student's anticipated program of study. It allows the student to identify their Area, faculty advisor(s), languages of study, proposed comprehensive exams, and outline of pedagogical and professional development training plan. The Course of Study Petition

must be approved by the student's advisor and proposed examiners and is often reviewed by the faculty in the student's Area of concentration. The Course of Study Petition is then submitted to the Committee on Degrees for review and approval via the appropriate form available on the Forms for Current Students [website](#). All Course of Study Petitions must be submitted to the Committee on Degrees for review and approval by the Friday of the 5th week of the spring quarter of the first year, unless otherwise announced by the Dean of Students Office.

Elements of the Course of Study Petition

The Course of Study petition includes a cover sheet (see below for formatting instructions) and statement. The cover sheet identifies the student's proposed comprehensive exams, the languages the student will use to fulfill their language requirements (both modern research languages and Area specific languages), their Advisor(s), teaching mentor, teaching plan, and professional development goals.

Included after the cover sheet, the Course of Study petition statement should be 1,000 words and double-spaced exclusive of the description of how the student will fulfill the Pedagogical Teaching Plan requirements as described below. The student should primarily discuss the work they intend to do in the Ph.D. program through the Qualifying Examination stage. The statement should clearly communicate the student's understanding of the proposed Area of concentration and how the course of study described addresses the work of that Area. It should indicate the broad content area and methods in which the student situates their work as well as the narrower topic, research questions, and methods in which they intend to work. The statement should indicate the rationale for each of the four written examinations they will take. (Please see the section on Qualifying Exams below for more details.) If the program involves significant work elsewhere in the University or field research, the student should indicate what plans have been or will be made to pursue it. (If a student subsequently wants to change any element of their Course of Study petition—exams, examiners, advisor, languages, PTP requirements—they may request to do so by means of a Minor Petition as discussed below.)

Additionally, the Course of Study Petition statement must explain the rationale for the modern research languages indicated and demonstrate that the languages are of central scholarly importance to the student's program (i.e., that the scholarly literature in the language is significant). The petition should also indicate whether the University offers a reading examination in the language or, in cases when such an examination is unavailable, explain how the student will certify reading competence. Note that for language examinations offered by the Chicago Language Center, a grade of High Pass (P*) is required. Please see the section on languages below for more information about this requirement.

If the student's Area has additional language requirements, the Course of Study petition should also indicate how the student will fulfill those requirements. Students should consult with their Advisor and Area Guidelines about additional language requirements.

The student should also explain in their Course of Study Petition how they plan to fulfill the requirements of the Pedagogical Teaching Plan (PTP). An explanation of each element is required in addition to the summary in the cover page as noted above. The explanation should include the following elements. If the student has completed any of the following elements, that information should be indicated both in the narrative explanation and on the cover page above.

- A. An explanation of why the teaching mentor was chosen.
- B. A discussion of when the student plans to fulfill the required pedagogical training elements of the plan (Chicago Center for Teaching's Teaching@Chicago Workshop and the Course Design and College Teaching Course (CCTE 50000)).

- C. A list of any additional pedagogical training such as the Craft of Teaching Certificate, Critical Pedagogy in the University Classroom (CCTE 50200), the Chicago Center for Teaching Certificate, CTC Emphasis on Writing Pedagogy, CTC course in Second Language Pedagogy, or ICT course consultation while teaching a stand alone course that the student plans to undertake as well as an explanation of how such activities will help the student in their pedagogical goals.
- D. A description of which teaching experiences the student plans to complete including the timeframe for completion. The student should indicate why these experiences will be a valuable contribution to their pedagogical development. If the student plans to have teaching experiences that require certain pedagogical training (i.e. serve as a writing intern, writing lector, or serve as an instructor of record for a language course), they should indicate when they will complete this training.
- E. An indication of when the student plans to complete their teaching statement

If the student does not intend to formally associate with an Area, the faculty listed in their Course of Study Petition as examiners will serve as the committee evaluating their yearly progress until the student reaches candidacy. The student should provide a description of and an intellectual rationale structuring their course of study in this way, clearly communicating the student’s understanding of the proposed Area of concentration and how the course of study described addresses the work of that Area. The student should also indicate why it is necessary to structure their course of study outside of an existing Area.

If the Course of Study Petition does not contain the above elements in a way clearly comprehensible to other scholars engaged in the academic study of religion, regardless of discipline, or if the proposal is either too narrow or lacks specificity, the proposal may not be approved. The Committee on Degrees will write a letter to each student submitting a Course of Study Petition that indicates whether their petition is approved. The letter may indicate a clear approval; a provisional approval if clarification on a minor point is required; or a rejection, if an element of the petition is missing or is insufficiently explained. This letter, regardless of outcome, will also include any observations or suggestions the Committee on Degrees may have. Students are expected to respond to a provisional approval or a rejection within the specified timeline, usually three weeks of receiving their letter from the Committee on Degrees. A student who fails to submit a Course of Study Petition or does not respond to a provisional approval or rejection within the specified timeline will be considered to no longer be making satisfactory academic progress and may be placed on probation or removed from the program by the Committee on Degrees.

Course of Study Petition Cover Sheet: Below to the Course of Study Petition statement must be a cover sheet which follows the following format.

TO: The Committee on Degrees

FROM: Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Telephone Number | E-mail address

I petition the Committee on Degrees for approval of the course of study in _____ (Area and sub-Area if applicable).

- A. including the following four Ph.D. Qualifying Examinations:
1. (Exam #, Title, and Examiner/s e.g. HC 3 -- Modern Christianity (Evans))
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
- B. And including the following languages
1. (Modern research language #1, Method of Assessment | e.g. German- Reading German for Research Purposes)
 2. Modern research language #2 Method of Assessment | e.g. Spanish- Reading Spanish for Research Purposes)
 3. Additional languages required by my Area (please list with method of evaluation)
- C. I have consulted with Professor _____ concerning this petition and request that they be designated as Advisor for my course of study.
- D. Pedagogical Training Plan
1. My teaching mentor is (name)
 2. Pedagogical Training Plan
 - a. Describe pedagogical training opportunity and quarter of completion (e.g. Attend the Teaching @Chicago conference in Autumn 2021)
 - b. Describe pedagogical training opportunity
 - c. Describe pedagogical training opportunity
 3. Teaching Plan
 - a. List teaching opportunity and quarter of appointment
 - b. Describe teaching appointment and quarter of appointment
 - c. Describe teaching appointment and quarter of appointment
 4. Assessment Plan (Describe how your teaching will be assessed. Be sure to include when your teaching statement will be complete).

signature of student, date

signature of advisor, date

signature of examiner, date

signature of examiner, date

signature of examiner, date

signature of PTP mentor, date

Submit the statement and cover sheet (including Advisor's signature) to the Dean of Students Office via the electronic form available on the available on the Forms for Current Students [website](#).

SECOND-YEAR PROGRESS CONFERENCE

These conferences are normally held in the spring quarter of the second year. Students and advisors are responsible for scheduling the conference near the beginning of the Spring Quarter of the second year.

Conferences are held with the respective Area's guidelines (see below for general guidelines) and will include a review of the student's course of study petition, assessment of coursework to date, assessment of the student's readiness for qualifying examinations, development of the dissertation project, progress regarding the PTP, and a review of the student's career plans. Students are required to submit a substantive research paper for discussion at the conference—students should consult their Advisor and Area guidelines for specific requirements.

The pre-exam progress conference will be held for 1 hour, 15 minutes; 90 minutes maximum.

Following the conference, a report from the Advisor and a timeline for the qualifying examinations is submitted to the Dean of Students for review by the Committee on Degrees. This form is available on the Information for Faculty [website](#). If a student fails the conference, the student is considered to no longer be making satisfactory academic process and may be placed on academic probation or withdrawn from the program by the Committee on Degrees.

For students in History of Judaism, History of Religions, Islamic Studies, and Philosophy of Religion: Second-Year Progress Conferences will involve Area faculty, chaired by advisors. While all faculty affiliated with the Area will be invited, a quorum of three is necessary.

For students in all other Areas:

The advisor, together with the faculty who have agreed to write qualifying examinations for the student, will convene a conference with the student. According to existing guidelines for qualifying examinations, the exam panel must include at least one examiner outside the student's Area of study and must include four faculty members. A minimum of three faculty members must participate at the pre-exam conference.

For students who have not affiliated with an Area:

The advisor, together with the faculty who have agreed to write qualifying examinations for the student, will convene a conference with the student.

LANGUAGES

A foundational commitment of the Divinity School is the notion that intellectual citizenship requires multilingual proficiency. The Divinity School therefore requires all its doctoral students to demonstrate academic reading comprehension in two (2) modern research languages as required for the student's research in addition to any language requirements of the student's Area of Study. Modern research languages enable students to engage with scholarly literature in their Area of Study and across the broader field of religious studies.

To meet this requirement, students may take the Academic Reading Competency Assessment (ARCA) or a Reading for Research Purposes course (e.g. FREN/GRMN/SPAN 33333) offered by the University of Chicago Language Center. Students taking the ARCA exam must earn a grade of High Pass (P*) to satisfy the language requirement. Students who elect to take a Reading for Research Purposes course must earn a grade of A to satisfy the language requirement.

Students admitted to the Ph.D. program from either the Divinity School's MA or MDIV program who earned a High Pass (P*) on the ARCA or A in the Research for Reading Purposes course for the masters-level language requirement can count this as one of the doctoral modern research language requirement if deemed appropriate for their course of study.

All modern research language requirements and Area specific language requirements must be met before a student takes qualifying exams.

Students should consult with their advisor and, as part of their Course of Study Petition, propose a mechanism for demonstrating academic reading competency for languages not offered by the University of Chicago Language Center or for those not assessed through the ARCA or Reading for Research Purposes course. If a Divinity School faculty member is able to administer an exam in the language, that is the preferred method. If no Divinity School faculty member can administer such an exam, coursework may be used to demonstrate competence. Each case will be considered on its own merits.

Individual Areas of Study may maintain their own additional language exam requirements. Students should consult with their Advisor and Area guidelines about additional language requirements.

Students who completed their Course of Study Petition prior to summer 2019 who now wish to make changes to their modern research language requirements need to submit a Minor Petition to the Committee on Degrees to do so.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

The Qualifying Examinations consist of the four written examinations specified in the student's Course of Study Petition, a research paper, and a concluding oral examination focused on the research paper and the written examinations. Exams should be drawn from among those offered by the Areas of study as best suited to the student's program in accordance with Area guidelines. All Ph.D. students are required to take one written examination outside of their Area.

Students must register for examinations by the first Friday of the quarter in which the examinations are to be held, using a form available on the Forms for Current Students [website](#).

The process of study leading up to the examination provides an opportunity for systematic consideration of the student's field of professional competence in the student's Area of Study as well as in at least one other related field. These studies aim to prepare the student for dissertation work and a lifetime of professional work engaged with the academic study of religion. The consistent feedback from graduates about the examinations is that precisely because they are demanding, they provide a wealth of knowledge increasingly unique among graduate programs. This foundation gives our students grounds for confidence in their field of study and thereby supports careers of teaching and research, as well as careers outside the academy. The examination itself is intended to demonstrate the student's general knowledge of the scholarship in these professional fields of competence, the student's intellectual relationship to the field, and the student's readiness to pursue a dissertation.

Written Examinations

The written examinations test the student's ability to organize, synthesize, and analyze a substantial body of knowledge and reading in response to questions set by the faculty. Exams are offered on Monday and Thursday during the fifth and sixth weeks of each quarter and must be taken under the supervision of a proctor. Students are expected to sign an exam protocol form, attesting to the method

of the exam and academic integrity. After students register for exams, the Dean of Students Office will contact each examining student with further exam instructions and protocols. Staff from the Dean of Students Office proctor exams in Swift Hall (or online if and when pandemic conditions require such a format) and students are expected to take their exams at these set times and in the building unless extenuating circumstances warrant a different arrangement, which must be approved by the Dean of Students. In such cases, the student should be in touch with the Dean of Students office at least two weeks in advance for arrangements to be made. Each written examination is four hours in length. The optimal length of a student's answer to any one set of examination questions is a total of 3,000 to 4,500 words, or ten to fifteen typed, double-spaced pages. Decisions about whether an examination is open- or closed-book are at the discretion of each examiner.

Research Paper

Based on consultation between the student and the student's Advisor, the research paper will ordinarily have as its topic a subject in the student's intended area of dissertation research. It should indicate the student's capacity for writing a dissertation. The paper should be twenty-five to forty pages, typed and double-spaced and should be submitted to all examiners in the first week of the quarter in which the student plans to take the qualifying examination.

Oral Examination

The oral examination tests the student's ability to engage in discussion of issues relevant to their fields of competence. It normally takes place in the seventh or eighth week of the quarter and lasts approximately three (3) hours. Students should consult with their Advisor about the format of the exam. Generally, the exam will proceed roughly as follows: Approximately the first thirty minutes of the examination period is a meeting for the faculty alone to confer about the written materials and develop questions and points of discussion. When the student joins the faculty the examination generally begins with the student making comments for 5-8 minutes to clarify, correct, or develop one or more key ideas from the material under review. Faculty proceed to ask questions about the student's statement and exams. After approximately 90 minutes of discussion with the student, the discussion turns to the paper for approximately 30 minutes. The student is asked to leave the room so faculty can deliberate about the student's performance. The faculty assign grades for individual exams and come to agreement on the student's strengths and places to improve. This material is noted on the form to be submitted to the Dean of Students Office (available on the Information for Faculty [website](#)). The student is then asked to come back to the room and given the results of the examination. The Advisor may meet with the student individually to give more in-depth feedback. Under pandemic conditions, the oral examination may be held online. Under typical conditions, meeting in person is preferred but the student or examiner/s may participate virtually or via phone as needed.

Grading Examinations

The Dean of Students collects provisional grades on the written examinations at least three (3) days before the scheduled Oral Examination and shares them with the examining committee. The student's Advisor convenes the oral examination and leads the committee's discussion of assigning grades.

Both the written and oral examinations are graded on the following scale:

- A Outstanding
- A- Very Good
- B+ Good
- B Acceptable
- B- Fail

To achieve a passing grade on the qualifying examination, a student must score B (Acceptable) or higher on all examinations. In cases where most or all of the written examinations are at the Acceptable level, a strong oral examination is necessary in order for the student to pass the qualifying examination. Grades on qualifying examinations are not subject to further review and failed qualifying examinations may not be retaken. Students who do not pass the Qualifying Examinations will be withdrawn from the program.

Examiners

At least three of a minimum of four examiners must be members of the faculty (including associated faculty) at the Divinity School. A student who wishes to include a faculty member from outside the Divinity School as an examiner for one of the qualifying exams consults with the faculty chair of the Area offering the exam to request this arrangement. The faculty chair consults with the Area and, with its approval, invites the outside examiner to participate as a co-examiner.

Changing Examiners or Examinations

A student who wishes to change from one exam to another or to switch examiners may submit a Minor Petition to the Committee on Degrees as described in the section on Minor Petitions further on in this Handbook.

Qualifying Exam Bibliographies

Students are entitled to be examined on the Qualifying Exam bibliographies in effect at the time their course of study petition is approved. Bibliographies, for Areas that have standardized bibliographies, are available online through the Area's websites. At the examiner's discretion, the student may be asked to develop a bibliography for approval, which must be secured before the student may apply to take exams. Students should also be sure to consult with their examiners about their bibliographies well ahead of time. Minor Petitions are not required to change exam bibliographies, only to change exams and/or examiners. While preparing for exams, students are advised to consult past exams, available through the Dean of Students Office digital files.

Timelines, Eligibility, and Registration for the Qualifying Exams

Qualifying examinations are to be completed according to the timetable outlined in the Second-Year Progress Conference. For most Areas, qualifying examinations will occur by the end of the third year, while students in Bible and ASR generally take them in year four. Students who are not taking exams by the end of their third year, whether due to the plan outlined in their Second Year Progress Conference or otherwise, will undergo a third-year review as described under Annual Reviews.

The Dean of Students Office assists the student and faculty in scheduling the examinations and is responsible for the receipt and distribution of the written examination questions and responses.

Students register for qualifying examinations with the Dean of Students office no later than the first week of the quarter in which the examinations are to be taken, using the form available on the Forms for Current Students [website](#). The research paper written by the student to be considered during the exams should be submitted to all examiners during the first week of the quarter in which the student takes the qualifying examination. Written exams are taken during week 5 and 6 as described above. The oral examination generally occurs in week 7 or 8.

In order to be eligible to register for qualifying exams, students must have fulfilled all coursework and language requirements. In other words, students may not have Incomplete grades for their required 12 courses, but may have Incompletes beyond the required 12.

PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING PLAN

A key feature of the Divinity School's doctoral program is a significant commitment to helping our students become effective and thoughtful educators. The School is committed to this formation as a part of our curriculum for all doctoral students, even those who are not anticipating a career in teaching. The rationales are that the skills of an effective educator are needed for all professions that wish to communicate intelligently in the public sphere about religion and because teaching and research are mutually reinforcing in advanced work in the study of religion.

Students who matriculated into the doctoral program before Summer 2016 must complete teaching assignments equivalent to a total of five (5) teaching points, consistent with the established point system for various levels of teaching appointments under the Graduate Aid Initiative (GAI), unless they opt into the PTP as described below. In general, Teaching Assistantships are worth one (1) point, and instructorships or lectureships are worth two (2) points. Any questions about the point value of a particular assignment should be directed to the Dean of Students office.

Students who matriculated into the doctoral program before Summer 2016 may elect to complete a PTP instead of completing the GAI teaching points to take advantage of the mentoring and training components of the program. Students wishing to be eligible for hire as a Divinity School Teaching Fellow (TF) as of Fall 2022 must complete a Pedagogical Training Plan. In other words, if they are to begin teaching as a TF in Fall 2022 they need a completed PTP by Spring 2022 to submit with their application. Students who matriculated before Summer 2016 that do not wish to be eligible for hire as a Teaching Fellow are required to fulfill 5 GAI points.

Students who matriculated into the doctoral program before Summer 2016 and wish to transition to the PTP must submit a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees no later than the Spring 2021 submission deadline.

Students who matriculated into the doctoral program in Summer 2016 or later must complete a Pedagogical Training Plan (PTP). The Divinity School Pedagogical Training Plan (PTP) transforms the teaching requirement of the doctoral program. It requires a combination of pedagogical training, teaching, and mentoring experiences. The plan is designed to holistically prepare students to teach in the academic study of religion

The components of the Divinity School's PTP are:

Pedagogical Training: To satisfy the pedagogical training component of the plan, students must complete the Teaching@Chicago workshop offered by the Chicago Center for Teaching. This course must be completed before becoming a Teaching Assistant (TA). Students must also complete the Course Design and College Teaching Course (CCTE 50000) offered by the Chicago Center for Teaching. This course must be completed before becoming an instructor of record for a course.

Teaching: To satisfy the teaching component of the plan, students must earn the equivalent of 4 GAI points, preferably through 2 minor experiences and 1 major experience. Minor teaching experiences include serving as a Teaching Assistant or Writing Intern—experiences that would award 1 point in the GAI system. Major teaching experiences involve stand-alone lectureships—experiences that award 2 points in the GAI system. While this 2/1 ratio of minor to major experiences is the preferred method, students may satisfy the teaching component of the PTP in other ratios depending on the availability of teaching positions and the student's pedagogical aims.

Mentoring: To satisfy the mentoring component of the plan, students must 1) identify a faculty mentor, 2) develop a professional development and teaching plan, 3) receive feedback on all teaching experiences; 4) create and receive feedback on a teaching statement.

PTP Recommended Framework

A usual plan to integrate teaching experience into students' broader program of professional preparation is as follows. Students should consult with their academic Advisor or teaching mentor to plan for the timing of completion of teaching assignments. Students are not required to follow this framework; their progression will be assessed individually based on the teaching plan that is developed in consultation with the faculty advisor and/or teaching mentor. For a visual representation of this material see PTP Framework Guide.

- Years 1-2: Students ordinarily spend their first two years focused on courses and language study and do not teach. As a result, there are no teaching requirements in these years. It is encouraged that students identify a teaching mentor, develop teaching goals, and create a preliminary teaching and professional development plan in the first year and include this information in the Course of Study Petition. During the first two years of the program, students should also complete the first pedagogical requirements of the PTP, listed below. Students should also participate in the opportunities offered by the Craft of Teaching program at the Divinity School.
 - Teaching@Chicago: This half-day conference is designed to orient new teaching assistants to the culture, structure, elements, and practices of teaching at the University of Chicago. For more details, please visit the CCT's website.
 - Pedagogical training in writing: Recognizing that the ability to teach writing is a significant part of teaching in the academic study of religion, and that teaching experience with diverse student populations and in diverse pedagogical settings is a valuable part of pedagogical training, students will normally take one of the following two courses to develop their pedagogical skills. (As a side benefit, learning about teaching writing often helps students improve their own writing skills.)
 - Humanities 50000: Pedagogies of Writing
Pedagogies of Writing prepares graduate students with the writing principles and pedagogy necessary to work as Writing Interns and/or Writing Tutors in the Humanities College Core. Students who have received a Course Assistantship in Humanities Division courses are also eligible to take this course, if seats are available. (Offered in Spring and Summer quarters).
 - English 50300: Principles of Teaching Writing
Principles of Teaching Writing is a course for graduate students to prepare them with the writing principles and pedagogical skills necessary to work as Lectors in our flagship course ENGL 33000: Academic and Professional Writing (aka The Little Red Schoolhouse). (Offered in Autumn quarter).¹

- Years 3-4: Students should hold two TA positions or equivalent experience to build teaching skills and exposure to different pedagogical practices and content-specific teaching techniques (two teaching points). Faculty mentors should give feedback to students while in TA positions to satisfy the mentoring component of the plan in these years. Students should also use this

¹ Copied in here from <https://writing-program.uchicago.edu/page/writing-program-courses>

time to complete the one or more of the following pedagogical requirements, depending on their teaching plan.

- CCTE 50000- Course Design and College Teaching
Course Design and College Teaching prepares graduate students to teach in the College through an intentional reflection on teaching practice, learning styles, inclusive pedagogy, classroom management, and assessment. Students must complete this course before being appointed as a lecturer.
 - 50100- Language Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom Language
Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom prepares graduate students to teach language effectively. Students must complete this course before being appointed as a language lecturer.
- Years 5 and 6: Teach one stand-alone course in these years (2 teaching points each). Students are expected to have a pre-course meeting with the teaching mentor to receive feedback on the syllabus, course design, and assessments. The teaching mentor is also expected to observe the student lead at least one class discussion or lecture during the stand-alone course and give feedback. Lastly, the teaching mentor is expected to review course evaluations with the student and discuss ways to improve the course. Students must complete a teaching statement, to be reviewed by the teaching mentor.

PTP Transition Plan

The PTP transition plan organizes current doctoral students into 4 groups:

- Group 1: Students with 4 or more GAI points who matriculated in Summer 2016 or later. These students have fulfilled the teaching component of the PTP. Students will be required to submit a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees outlining their progress toward the pedagogical training and mentoring components of the PTP no later than the deadline for submission to Committee on Degrees in Spring 2021.
- Group 2: Students with 4 or more GAI points who matriculated before Summer 2016. These students have fulfilled the teaching component of the PTP. If the student wishes to be eligible for hire in the Teaching Fellows Program, they must submit a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees outlining their progress toward the pedagogical training and mentoring components of the PTP no later than the deadline for submission to Committee on Degrees in Spring 2021. Student who do not wish to complete a PTP and will thus be ineligible for hire as Teaching Fellow must amass 5 teaching points, as per the GAI system.
- Group 3: Students with fewer than 4 GAI points and who matriculated in Summer 2016 or later. GAI points transfer to the PTP in a one-to-one ratio. Students in this cohort must submit a pedagogical training and mentoring plan to the Committee on Degrees as a minor petition no later than Spring 2021.
- Group 4: Students with fewer than 4 GAI points who matriculated *before* Summer 2016. GAI points transfer to the PTP in a one-to-one ratio. Students should submit a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees by Spring 2021 outlining how they will fulfill all components of their pedagogical training plan if they wish to complete the PTP. Students who do not wish to complete a PTP (and will thus be ineligible for hire as a Teaching Fellow starting in the fall of 2022) will need to earn 5 GAI points.

PTP Recommended Framework Chart

	Pre-requisite Pedagogical Training	Teaching	Pedagogical Training and Support			
Year	The following courses and workshops are required preparation for teaching, as noted.	Required Teaching Experience <i>These teaching positions are required for graduation.</i>	Faculty Teaching Mentorship <i>Faculty are required to review all student teaching. Students should inform the DOS of their teaching positions.</i>	Craft of Teaching Requirements <i>Students are strongly encouraged but not required to complete the CoT Certificate.</i>	Other Pedagogical Training	Learning Goals
1	Teaching@Chicago Workshop (CCT) – <i>required to serve as a course assistant (CA) or teaching assistant (TA)</i>	None	Determine faculty mentor Student/faculty mentor meet to discuss teaching goals and preliminary teaching plan	1 Introductory Craft of Teaching Workshop		Develop foundational knowledge of discipline
2	Pedagogies of Writing (HUMA 50000) – <i>required to serve as writing intern</i> Or Principles of Teaching Writing (ENGL 50300) – <i>required to serve as writing lector</i>	1 Teaching Assistantship (undergrad TA, writing intern, or writing lector)	Instructor of record observation and/or feedback on at least one CA/TA-led discussion or guest lecture during course assistantship	1-2 Introductory Craft of Teaching Workshops		Develop foundational knowledge of discipline Learn about undergraduate students and resources for teaching at Chicago, and reflect on first experiences in the classroom Develop skills in writing or language instruction, grading, and providing feedback Practice and get feedback on classroom instruction

3	Language Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom (CCTE 50100) – <i>required to serve as instructor of record for a language course</i>	1 teaching assistantship, ideally in an undergraduate RLST course <i>Students may seek out an additional course assistantship in the college.</i>	Instructor of record observation and/or feedback on at least one discussion or lecture during course assistantship	1-2 Introductory Craft of Teaching Workshops		Develop foundational knowledge of methods for leading effective discussions, assessing student learning, grading practices, and norms
4				1 Advanced Craft of Teaching Workshop Course Design and College Teaching Course (CCTE 50000)		Practice and get feedback on classroom instruction Reflect on and develop disciplinary teaching practices. Reflect on and develop inclusive teaching practices Develop draft course syllabus Begin to develop a teaching philosophy
5	Course Design and College Teaching Course (CCTE 50000) – <i>required before teaching a standalone course</i>	1 Stand-alone course <i>(Note: if a student is unable to secure an opportunity to teach a stand-alone course, the student should work with his/her/their faculty mentor to determine an alternative way to satisfy the year 5-6+ PTP requirement, and file a minor petition with the Committee on</i>	Pre-course meeting with faculty (advisor, DUS, etc.) to review syllabus and receive feedback on assignment design Faculty mentor observation and feedback on at least one discussion or lecture during the stand-alone course Post-course feedback on comments on student work Faculty mentor feedback on the teaching statement	1-2 Advanced Craft of Teaching Workshops	ICT course consultation during stand-alone course (CCT)	Teach an inclusive and well-conceived course in the discipline Practice and get feedback on classroom instruction Design an inclusive and well-conceived course, based on meaningful learning objectives, informed by active learning methods, and assessment practices appropriate to the discipline Develop a statement of teaching philosophy and begin to synthesize evidence and reflection on teaching Reflect on inclusive teaching practices
6+				1-2 Advanced Craft of Teaching Workshops (recommended teaching portfolio or teaching statement workshop)	<u>Optional pedagogy training opportunities:</u> Critical Pedagogy in the University Classroom (CCTE 50200), College Teaching Certificate (CCT), CTC Emphasis on Writing	

		<i>Degrees outlining this alternative.)</i>		Teaching Statement (i.e. complete the Craft of Teaching certificate)	Pedagogy, or CTC in Second Language Pedagogy	
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PTP Minor Petitions

All doctoral students that matriculated into the program in Summer 2020 or later must submit a PTP as part of the Course of Study Petition as described above.

All doctoral students that matriculated into the program between Summer 2016 and Autumn 2019 must submit a pedagogical teaching plan as a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees by the Spring 2021 submission deadline. As of the 2021-2022 academic year, pedagogical teaching plans will be considered in the annual review process.

Students who matriculated before Summer 2016 have until Spring 2021 to decide if they want to complete a PTP. Those who elect to complete a PTP must submit a pedagogical teaching plan as a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees by the Spring 2021 submission deadline. For these students, pedagogical teaching plans will be considered in the annual review process.

Students who matriculated before Summer 2016 that do not submit a minor petition to complete a PTP must satisfy the teaching requirements of the GAI. That is, to earn 5 teaching points.

In addition to the formal requirement of the GAI or PTP, students are encouraged to participate in the opportunities offered by the Craft of Teaching program at the Divinity School, the Chicago Center for Teaching, and events offered by UChicago Grad regarding teaching and other forms of professional development.

PTP Minor Petition Template

Below is a template for the PTP Minor Petition. For additional guidance about what to include in a minor or course of study petition regarding the PTP, please refer to the other sections of this Handbook about the PTP including the feedback forms for TAs and graduate students teaching as an instructor of record.

DATE:

TO: Committee on Degrees

FROM: Student Name

CC: Program Advisor

- A. Identification of Teaching Mentor. Identify your teaching mentor and explain the choice of this mentor.
- B. Pedagogical Training
 1. Have you completed the Chicago Center for Teaching's Teaching@Chicago Workshop? If so, when? If not, when do you plan to complete this training? Remember that this is required before you serve as a course assistant (CA) or teaching assistant (TA) and is offered during orientation week.
 2. Have you completed the Course Design and College Teaching Course (CCTE 50000). If not, when do you plan to complete this training? Remember that it is required before teaching a stand alone class at the University of Chicago and recommended before teaching a similar course elsewhere.

3. Do you plan to complete additional pedagogical training such as the Craft of Teaching Certificate, Critical Pedagogy in the University Classroom (CCTE 50200), the Chicago Center for Teaching Certificate, CTC Emphasis on Writing Pedagogy, CTC course in Second Language Pedagogy, or ICT course consultation while teaching a stand alone course?

C. Teaching Experiences

1. How many teaching points have you completed?
2. List teaching points earned to date. You may copy and paste from your previous annual review, adding any new points that you have received.
3. If you have not yet earned 4 teaching points, describe which teaching experiences you plan to do including the timeframe for completion. Indicate why these experiences will be a valuable contribution to your pedagogical development. If you plan to have teaching experiences that require certain pedagogical training (i.e. serve as a writing intern, writing lector, or serve as an instructor of record for a language course), indicate when you will complete this training.

D. Mentoring and Assessment- If you still have some or all of your teaching experiences to complete, describe how you and your mentor plan to work together beyond the required mentor feedback when you teach your own course. Remember that instructors of record of courses in which there is a TA need to evaluate their TAs according to the TA evaluation form

- If you have already completed your teaching experiences (points under the GAI), describe how you and your mentor will work together to reflect on and improve your pedagogical training and preparation. Possibilities include, but are not limited to, the following.
 - Meet with your mentor to review your syllabus, course evaluations, and your impressions of the course, discussing how you understand its strengths and weaknesses and which aspects of the course you would repeat or change if teaching it, or any other class in the future.
 - Develop additional sample syllabi for future courses and discuss with your mentor.
 - Reading and discussing articles on a specific area of pedagogical interest (e.g. teaching a particular topic in religion, diversity and inclusion, online teaching, lecturing, teaching controversial subjects, etc.)

PTP Instructor of Record Evaluation Form

Below is the form for teaching mentors to use to evaluate courses taught by students, when students are listed as instructors of record. A copy of this form is available on the Forms for Current Students [website](#) and the Information for Faculty [website](#).

Date:

Student Instructor:

Course:

Faculty Mentor:

- Part 1: Over the course of a term, the graduate student instructor of a course and their mentor will engage several times about the instructor's course. For each meeting, described below, there are several suggested questions to guide the discussion. After each meeting, the mentor should

summarize the discussion in a paragraph to be written into this document. At the end of the course and review process, a copy of the review document should be submitted to the Dean of Students Office.

- A. Course Description [to be completed by the instructor]. This should include course listing, number of registered students, course meeting schedule, course's relation to department requirements (i.e. Major requirement, Core requirement, Elective, etc.), and week of mentor observation.
- B. Mentor Review of the Syllabus- This exchange, via meeting or email, should occur before the term starts. The mentor may also comment directly on the syllabus if preferred rather than answering questions on this document. In that case, a copy of the syllabus with comments should be submitted with this document to the Dean of Students Office when this document is completed.
- C. Clarity of course goals and expectations: Appropriateness of assigned materials (content, length, order) and Assessment of assignments (clarity, pedagogical aims, fit for course level);
General Feedback on the syllabus:
 - 1. Discuss the following questions with the instructor: (a) What assignments have you designed for the course? (b) Do you have a clear plan for assessing the quality of student work on each assignment? (c) How do you plan to weight assignments and expectations in the final grade? (d) Can you anticipate any challenges with these assignments for students?

- Part 2- Pre-observation Communication: This information should be sent to the mentor a week before the observation. The observation date should be chosen through a dialogical process with instructor and mentor.

Date of observation:

- A. What are your overall goals for this class session?
- B. How well do you think your students are engaging in the course so far?
- C. What do you think are your main strengths and weaknesses as a teacher?
- D. When I come to observe your course, what feedback would be most helpful?

- Part 3- Observation and Recommendations: This can happen at any part of the term, but should occur early enough to allow the instructor to benefit from feedback. In other words Part 3 and 4 may be reversed temporally. The mentor and instructor should meet soon after the observation to debrief.)

Date:

The mentor should attend 1-1.5 hour(s) of the class period. If possible, the mentor should enter the class at the beginning of the period so as not to disrupt the conversation/lecture. Mentors should sit away from the students and refrain from intervening in the discussion or lecture in any way.

While it is greatly preferred that the mentor attend the course under review, if the mentor cannot attend, the instructor and mentor should work together to arrange a recording of the class session for the mentor to review at a later time.

Please analyze the presentation along the following lines and focus on techniques that are generalizable to a variety of courses.

Introduction and Class Organization:

- Does the instructor begin class effectively? Does the instructor engage students and orient them to the material to be covered that day and the learning goals?
- Does the instructor present the material in a logical sequence, with transitions such that the students can follow?
- Does the instructor pace the class appropriately for student understanding?

Presentation Form and Substance:

- Does the instructor speak clearly, at an appropriate volume and pace?
- Does the instructor use eye contact and body language effectively?
- Does the instructor use clear examples?
- Does the instructor effectively use visual aids – chalkboard, physical materials, powerpoint, videos, etc?

Teacher-Student Interactions:

- How does the instructor engage with the students? What means of instruction are used? Is there time for questions?
- How are the students engaged? How is participation distributed among the students?
- Does the instructor clearly communicate about expectations for assignments and next steps?

Content Knowledge:

- Has the instructor clearly explained the content of the course?
- Does the instructor convey to students the complexity and diversity of viewpoints on the topic? General feedback with actionable and clear teaching strategies:

The instructor should also reflect upon what went well and what could be improved upon. The instructor may also reflect on student feedback as relevant.

- Part 4: Mid-Course Review Report: The instructor should ask all students to participate in a short, mid-course review during week 5. Those review results should be anonymous and collected by the instructor. The instructor is responsible for sending a complete set of responses to the mentor for review.

The questions on the mid-course review should include the following:

- What elements of the course have been effective for your learning?
- Which, if any, readings or assignments have you found less engaging and why?
- Do you feel comfortable contributing to class discussions? Y/N
- What could the instructor do to make you feel more comfortable participating?
- What could the instructor do to further improve your learning in this course?

Mentors should provide feedback as necessary and to help the instructor contextualize student evaluations.

- Part 5: Final Course Evaluation Report to be completed by the instructor. The graduate student instructor should ask all students to participate in the evaluation process of the unit in which they are teaching. After evaluation results are accessible, the graduate student instructor should meet with their mentor to discuss the evaluations, guided by the following questions:
 - How do you interpret the results of your student evaluations?
 - Reflecting on student evaluations and your assessment of the course as a whole, what would you keep the same and change if you were teaching this course again next term?
 - Did teaching this course change your thinking about the subject? If so, how?
 - What questions do you have for me (the mentor) about the evaluations?

Mentors should write a paragraph summarizing the highlights of their conversation and the evaluations. **When this process is complete, mentors and instructors should both retain a copy of this form and a copy should be submitted to the Dean of Students Office** to verify that mentoring has occurred.

PTP Teaching Assistant Review Form

Below is the evaluation form for teaching mentors to use to evaluate courses taught by students, when students are listed as teaching assistants. A copy of this form is available on the Forms for Current Students [website](#) and the Information for Faculty [website](#).

Date:

Teaching Assistant:

Course:

Instructor of Record:

Over the course of a term, the graduate student teaching assistant and the instructor of record will engage several times about their course. For each such meeting, described below, there are several suggested questions to guide the discussion. After each meeting, the instructor of record should summarize the discussion in a paragraph, to be written into this document. At the end of the course and review process, a copy of the review document should be submitted to the Dean of Students Office.

Course Information [to be completed by the instructor of record]:

- Department(s) and/or Area of study
- Course level
- Number of students
- Course format (i.e. lecture, discussion/seminar, online, hybrid, etc.)
- Course meeting schedule (e.g. two times per week, 1.5 hours, 10-week quarter)
- Course's relation to departmental requirements (i.e. Major requirement, Core requirement, Elective, etc.)
- Week of mentor observation (e.g. 5th week of the winter quarter)

Part 1: Pre-quarter Meeting

Date:

- What does the TA hope to learn from this assignment?
- What expectations does the instructor of record have for the TA?
- What questions do you have about the overall goals of this course?
- Do you have questions about the syllabus?
- Discuss expectations for grading and intentions behind the assignments.
- Do you have a clear understanding for how to assess the quality of student work on each assignment?
- Can you anticipate any challenges with these assignments for students?
- If a TA is to lead a class session, indicate the date here. Or, if the TA leads a discussion section, then indicate the date at which the instructor of record will observe the discussion section.

Part 2: Observation and Recommendations- This can happen at any part of the term, but should occur early enough to allow the instructor to benefit from feedback. In other words Part 2 and 3 may be reversed temporally. The instructor of record and TA should meet soon after the observation to debrief.)

Date:

The Instructor of Record should attend either a lecture or mini-lecture that the TA is assigned at the beginning of the quarter or a regularly planned discussion section. If the instructor cannot attend the discussion section under review, the TA and instructor should work together to arrange a recording of the class session for the instructor to review at a later time. If the TA is not going to lead a class session or discussion session, then the instructor of record should provide detailed feedback on some other aspect of the TA's work (e.g. grading).

Suggested topics:

Introduction and Class Organization

- Does the TA begin class effectively? Does the TA engage students and orient them to the material to be covered that day and the learning goals?
- Does the TA present the material in a logical sequence, with transitions such that the students can follow?
- Does the TA pace the class appropriately for student understanding?

Presentation Form:

- Does the TA speak clearly, at an appropriate volume and pace?
- Does the TA use eye contact and body language effectively?
- Does the TA use clear examples?
- Does the TA effectively use visual aids – chalkboard, physical materials, powerpoint, videos, handouts, etc?

Teacher-Student Interactions:

- How does the TA engage with the students? What means of instruction are used? Is there time for questions?
- How are the students engaged? How is participation distributed among the students?

- Does the TA clearly communicate about expectations for assignments and next steps?

Content Feedback:

- Has the instructor clearly explained the content of the course?
- Does the instructor convey to students the complexity and diversity of viewpoints on the topic?

General feedback with actionable and clear teaching strategies:

The instructor should also reflect upon what went well and what could be improved upon. The instructor may also reflect on student feedback as relevant.

Part 3: Mid-Course Review Report

Date:

If the TA is holding a weekly discussion section, then at the discretion of the instructor of record, TAs may ask all students to participate in a short, mid-course review during week 5 in order to assess TA's teaching while there is still opportunity to learn and revise during the course. Those review results should be anonymous and collected by the TA. The TA is responsible for sending a complete set of responses to the instructor for review.

What elements of the course have been effective for your learning?

Do you feel comfortable contributing to conversation in discussion sections? Y/N

What could the TA do to make you feel more comfortable participating?

What could the TA do to further improve your learning in this course?

Instructors of record should provide feedback as necessary and to help the TA contextualize student evaluations.

Part 4: Final Course Evaluation Report- The instructor of record should ask all students to participate in the evaluation process of the unit in which they are teaching. Note that you often have to specifically request for an evaluation that includes feedback for the TA. After evaluation results are accessible, the Instructor of Record should meet with the TA to discuss the evaluations pertinent to the TA, guided by the following questions:

Date:

How do you interpret the results of your student evaluations?

- Reflecting on student evaluations and your assessment of the course as a whole, what would you keep the same and change if you were a TA for this course again next term?
- What questions do you have for me (the Instructor) about the evaluations?

Instructors should write a paragraph summarizing the highlights of their conversation and the evaluations.

When this process is complete, Instructors of Record and TAs should both retain a copy of this form and submit a copy to the Dean of Students Office.

PTP Transition Plan FAQs

Since the Pedagogical Training Plan is a new feature of our doctoral program and many current students are considering or are required to transition to it from the GAI system, we have developed a set of answers to frequently asked questions.

1. What is the Divinity School Pedagogical Training Plan?

The Divinity School Pedagogical Training Plan ("PTP") is the revised teaching requirement of the doctoral program. It is designed to train doctoral students to be teachers in two ways: (1) students advance through a series of mentored teaching experiences toward the goal of teaching a standalone course; (2) students participate in training programming and mentoring activities to gain the skills and tools they need to be effective in the classroom. For a detailed look at the plan please consult the Pedagogical Teaching Plan Outline.

2. Is the PTP required of all doctoral students?

The PTP is required of all students who matriculated Summer 2016 or later.

Students who matriculated earlier than Summer 2016 will be able to remain on the old teaching plan (GAI points) if they are not interested in being a Divinity Teaching Fellow in Fall 2022 or after.

Students who matriculated before Summer 2016 may wish to transition to the PTP in order to be eligible for a Divinity School Teaching Fellowship in Fall 2022 and after.

3. When does the Divinity School PTP go into effect?

The transition from the GAI points system to the PTP will begin in Fall 2020. The transition period will last up to two academic years. During the transition time, we encourage students to determine how to transition to the new program in consultation with faculty advisors, the Dean of Students Office, and Director of Doctoral Studies and work to do so.

Students who matriculated in Summer 2016 or later will be transitioned from the GAI system to the PTP as of Autumn 2020. These students must submit a pedagogical teaching plan as a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees by the Spring 2021 submission deadline as posted in the Ph.D. Student Handbook. Going forward, pedagogical teaching plans will be considered in the annual review process.

Students who matriculated before Summer 2016 have until Spring 2021 to decide if they want to complete a PTP. Those who elect to complete a PTP must submit a pedagogical teaching plan as a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees by the Spring 2021 submission deadline as posted in the Ph.D. Student Handbook. Going forward, pedagogical teaching plans will be considered in the annual review process.

Those students who matriculated before Summer 2016 who elect not to complete a PTP will be held to the 5 GAI point requirement.

4. How does this plan compare to the former model, i.e. the GAI points system?

There are a few key differences between the GAI points system and the PTP: Unlike the GAI which was focused solely on teaching, the PTP involves a combination of pedagogical training, mentoring, and teaching experiences. The PTP is part of a new funding model that is meant to allow students to focus on dissertation research and writing in the latter portion of their doctoral program. The PTP is a degree requirement, similar to other ancillary non-course degree requirements such as language requirements.

5. Will paid teaching opportunities be available going forward?

Starting in Fall 2022, as per the Provost's policy, there are no paid teaching experiences across the University, including in the Divinity School, except prize teaching experiences (the Alma Wilson, the Language Lectureship, and the BA preceptorship). If you are applying for teaching positions outside the Divinity School, you should be sure to check as to whether they are eligible for remuneration.

Students who have completed the teaching component of the GAI or PTP may apply for remunerated teaching experiences at the Divinity School or across the University now through the end of spring 2022.

6. I am planning to count off-campus teaching toward my teaching points. How does the PTP transition impact my plans?

Doctoral students are expected to fulfill PTP requirements at The University of Chicago. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for students to pursue teaching off-campus. Students who wish to do so should work with the advisor and/teaching mentor to develop an appropriate and comparable pedagogical teaching plan which would include the off-campus experience. This plan must be then submitted as Minor Petition for approval by the Committee on Degrees. Any plan that includes teaching off-campus must include methods of evaluation and feedback.

7. I am a student that started the program in Summer 2016 or later, and I have already earned 5 teaching points. Will I receive the remuneration for the 5th teaching point that was once withheld from my stipend?

Students in the New Funding Model who have already earned 5 teaching points will receive the remuneration that was previously withheld from the living stipend for the 5th teaching point. The Dean of Students Office will send each eligible student a communication with this information.

8. How do I identify a teaching mentor?

In most instances a student's teaching mentor will be the faculty advisor. Students should feel free to reach out to the Director of Doctoral Studies and the Director of Undergraduate Studies to discuss options for establishing these mentor-mentee relationships.

Your advisor or another faculty member may be your PTP mentor. As you consider who you may like to have as a PTP mentor you may consider a variety of factors such as subject of study, pedagogical style, pedagogical experience (have they taught at a particular type of institution that interests you), etc. It is generally recommended that you have a PTP mentor from within the University, and particularly within the Divinity School since such faculty will have more knowledge of the PTP process and have particular responsibilities regarding it. Additionally, when you are teaching on campus, it will likely be easier for such faculty to observe your teaching. However, it is possible to have other faculty serve as a PTP mentor, provided that they understand and agree to the process and the Committee on Degrees approves.

9. Is there any relationship between the PTP and the Divinity Teaching Fellows Program?
Yes. As of Spring 2022, students must complete a PTP to be eligible for hire in the Divinity Teaching Fellows Program. Meaning, students who are applying for the 2022-2023 Teaching Fellowship should complete the requirements of a PTP by Spring 2022.

10. I'm interested in teaching (or have taught) a first-year language course in the Divinity School (Greek, Hebrew, Arabic). How does this relate to the PTP?
Teaching a language course is now considered a prize teaching experience in the Divinity School. Students may opt to allow it to count toward their PTP, depending on career goals. Teaching the language course will not preclude a student from later applying to the Alma Wilson program. Starting in Autumn 2020, students will only be allowed to hold the language lectureship once, meaning they will be allowed to teach the full sequence (two or three quarters, depending on the language) but cannot be hired to teach it again in future years.

11. I have earned 3 teaching points. Am I eligible to apply for the Alma Wilson Fellowship?
All Divinity School students transitioning to the PTP who have not taught a standalone content course, regardless of points earned, can apply for the Alma Wilson Fellowship.

12. I have earned 4 teaching points, but I have not yet taught a standalone content course. Am I ineligible to apply for the Alma Wilson Fellowship?

All Divinity School students transitioning to the PTP who have not taught a standalone content course, regardless of points earned, can apply for the Alma Wilson Fellowship.

13. Do I have to complete the requirements of the PTP in the year listed on the spreadsheet?
The spreadsheet indicates a pedagogical plan in which elements build on each other to move you to and through the goal of teaching your own class. Completing the steps in a different order may not be as beneficial. The Divinity School recommends that students do not serve as a teaching assistant in their first year. Beyond that, we recommend that you develop a teaching plan in consultation with your teaching mentor, and then once chosen, your mentor, in general alignment with the yearly plan outlined here.

14. How do I submit a Minor Petition about the PTP?
There will be an example in the Ph.D. Student Handbook. This Minor Petition should be submitted like the others, through a form available on the Forms for Current Students [website](#).

15. Who do I contact if I have questions about the PTP?
Both Associate Dean Lumpkin (alumpkin@uchicago.edu) and Director of Doctoral Studies Fredericks (sfredericks@uchicago.edu) can answer questions about the program. Administrative and financial questions should be directed to Dean Lumpkin, and questions about strategic academic and pedagogical planning should be directed to Professor Fredericks (as well as to your advisor, and once selected, your PTP mentor).

THE DISSERTATION

Upon completion of the qualifying examinations, the student proceeds to the dissertation, an original contribution to scholarship about religion. Divinity School dissertations are known for their methodological sophistication, depth of learning, and originality of thought. Many of these dissertations are published in leading university presses around the world. A list of past dissertations can be found on the Regenstein Library's website.

Four formal steps constitute the dissertation process:

- A. The dissertation proposal colloquium and subsequent approval of the approval by the Committee on Degrees.
- B. The midpoint review of the dissertation research.
- C. The oral defense of the completed dissertation.
- D. Filing the completed dissertation.

Throughout the process, the student is responsible for maintaining good contact with the dissertation committee and providing regular updates on progress.

The Dissertation Advisor, Reading Committee, and the Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal should develop out of the interests and competencies the student establishes through coursework and qualifying exams. In preparing the proposal, the student should work closely with the faculty Advisor for the project. It should be noted that the dissertation Advisor may be someone other than the student's program Advisor until this point. The Divinity School faculty considers an optimum dissertation to be approximately 200-250 pages.

The student will propose their dissertation project to their reading committee, which usually consists of their Advisor (who chairs the committee) and two readers. When appropriate, a student may petition for co-Advisors and one reader. Only in rare instances will a proposal of a committee of four members receive approval.

Non-Divinity School Faculty as Members of the Dissertation Committee

While the Advisor of a dissertation must be a Divinity School faculty member (including associated faculty), in some instances a student may, in consultation with the Advisor, elect to include a faculty member from outside the Divinity School as a member of the reading committee. When this individual is a member of the faculty of the University, no special arrangements are necessary. When the individual is a member of the faculty of another institution, the student should indicate briefly at the conclusion of the proposal why their participation as a member of the reading committee is essential. This is usually an argument that the individual's expertise cannot be found on the faculty of the University.

The dissertation proposal colloquium is a meeting of the student and the dissertation reading committee to review the dissertation proposal. The student and the Advisor schedule this colloquium, which usually occurs after the student has revised at least one draft of the proposal with the Advisor. Its scheduling should ensure that faculty attending have sufficient time to review the document and to make substantive suggestions. During the colloquium the student and the committee should discuss their expectations for their work together, including the timing of reading chapters and the format in which work should be submitted (by email or in hard copy).

Advancing to Candidacy

When the members of the dissertation reading committee approve the proposal, the student submits the proposal to the Dean of Students Office in the form of a formal petition to the Committee on Degrees using the appropriate form on the Forms for Current Students [website](#). Approval of this proposal by the Committee on Degrees establishes the student as a Ph.D. candidate. Students in the ASR and Bible Areas must advance to candidacy by the end of their 13th quarter in the program (normally Autumn quarter of their fifth year). All other students must advance to candidacy by the end of their 12th quarter (normally Spring quarter of the fourth year). Students that fail to advance to candidacy in the appropriate time will be considered to no longer be making satisfactory academic process and may be placed on academic probation or withdrawn from the program by the Committee on Degrees.

The Dissertation Proposal

Dissertation proposals must be submitted through the form available on the Forms for Current Students [website](#). Deadlines for submission are available in the calendar section of this handbook.

The proposal begins with a cover memo, signed and dated by the student and the members of the dissertation reading committee. The signatures of the faculty indicate that they have participated in the colloquium, that they judge the proposed dissertation to constitute a worthy and feasible project, and that they are willing to serve on the reading committee for the dissertation. The memo should be formatted as follows:

(Date)

TO: The Committee on Degrees

FROM: Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Telephone Number | E-mail address

Having passed my Qualifying Examinations with a concentration in the (Area of study), and having participated in a colloquium with the proposed members of my dissertation reading committee, I petition the Committee on Degrees for:

- 1) admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree;
- 2) approval of _____ as chair of my dissertation committee with _____ and _____ as readers; and
- 3) review of the attached dissertation proposal, entitled _____.

Signature of Student Date

Signature of Advisor Date

Signature of Reader Date

Signature of Reader Date

Next, the proposal includes a 15-25 page statement inclusive of

- A. A proposed title;
- B. Concise formulation of the problem to be researched;
- C. An indication of the methods to be employed;
- D. A discussion of the resources to be employed in the dissertation;
- E. A tentative statement of the hypothesis and argument of the dissertation; A statement of a thesis is not a mere exploration of a theme or idea, but a statement that stakes out an argument that the dissertation aims to develop and defend. It is something that a reasonable person could contest in light of the evidence. Certainly, a thesis may change with additional research, but having a provisional thesis in the proposal is critical to articulating what a student aims to contribute to the literature. In instances when the statement of a provisional thesis appears premature, the proposal should lay out the questions the dissertation will seek to answer and their significance, a reflection on the kinds of evidence required to answer the questions, the manner in which this evidence will be gathered, some provisional hypotheses, and the contributions the student expects to make to specific areas of scholarship by pursuing this inquiry.
- F. A brief discussion of the importance of the dissertation as an original contribution to knowledge, whether theoretical or practical (in submitting the proposal, a student attests that it is based upon a thorough investigation that has convinced the student that the thesis has not been previously argued in the manner proposed);
- G. A tentative outline by chapter of the dissertation

A timeline and bibliography as described below are required elements of the proposal but are, like the cover page, not to be included in the page limit described above.

- A. Timeline
 1. Anticipated timeline for the research and writing, midpoint review, and graduation; Articulating a timeline for completing the dissertation should be a dialogical process between student, advisor, committee members, and the Committee on Degrees.
 2. Timelines should presume no more than three years for the dissertation. Generally, the first year will include research (fieldwork, archival work, translations, library research, etc.) and initial outlining and drafting. Writing a chapter in the first year is often reasonable, depending on the type of research necessary. In the second year, two to three chapters should be written and the midpoint review completed. In the third year, the candidate should finish writing chapters, polish and integrate them, receive feedback from the committee, revise, defend, revise again as necessary, and file the dissertation. Students should consult with their advisors and committee, the Ph.D. Student Handbook and Dissertation Office's rules for filing as they put together their timelines.
 3. Timelines should include a detailed rationale of what is to be done and why it is necessary for the dissertation. For instance, if one is conducting fieldwork, one should note how long one anticipates spending at different sites and what one will do there. If one is conducting library research, one should indicate the kinds of materials sought and the timeframe for such investigations.
 4. Students should articulate how they will demonstrate their progress each year. This will be particularly important in cases where a significant period of time is going to be devoted to initial research before drafting. For instance, will they have translations, outlines, ethnographic reflections complete at the end of year one?

5. Timelines should also indicate significant professional development activities such as preparing job market materials, presenting at a conference, transforming a chapter into a journal article, or teaching.
- B. A brief formal bibliography should present the editions of primary texts to be consulted in the dissertation and a representative sample of the relevant secondary literature.

The Committee on Degrees serves three purposes regarding the evaluation of the dissertation proposal:

- A. To approve the reading committee for the proposed dissertation, thus admitting the student to Ph.D. candidacy.
- B. To assure that the dissertation proposal is (1) is clearly conceived and formulated as evidenced by a proposal that can communicate the student's project to other scholars engaged in the academic study of religion, regardless of discipline; (2) includes a detailed timeline to aid the student's writing process and facilitate review of their progress by their advisor, committee, and Committee on Degrees during annual reviews and at the midpoint review; (3) meets basic standards of academic rigor; (4) is accountable regarding its explicit relations, if any, to other areas of scholarly specialization.
- C. To enable that students receive relevant pedagogical advice (e.g. about sources and methods) that can strengthen the research project. Namely, we recognize that it may be intellectually beneficial for students to hear suggestions and questions from the faculty members on the Committee on Degrees.

To achieve these ends, the Committee on Degrees will write a letter to each student applying for Candidacy, indicating whether their proposal and committee are approved, and they have been advanced to candidacy. The letter may indicate a clear approval; a provisional approval if clarification on a minor point is required; or a rejection, if an element of the proposal is missing or is insufficiently explained. This letter, regardless of outcome, will also include any suggestions the Committee on Degrees may have to improve the project. Students are expected to respond to a provisional approval or a rejection within two weeks of receiving their letter from the Committee on Degrees.

Presenting work

The faculty recommends that students present the first or second chapter of their dissertation in a workshop, dissertation reading group, or conference for purposes of gaining feedback, developing professional skills of presenting and responding, and accountability. Students may also wish to develop writing groups with peers and/or participate in one of the writing workshops sponsored by UChicago Grad.

Midpoint Review

The midpoint oral review of dissertation research occurs at a time determined by the student in consultation with the advisor, usually after the student has written at least two chapters. It provides an opportunity for the student and the reading committee to discuss the work in progress, both to review what has been written and to discuss what needs to be done to complete the dissertation. The advisor provides written notification of the successful completion of the oral review to the Dean of Students via a form on the Information for Faculty [website](#).

Public Oral Defense of the Dissertation

The completion of a student's dissertation is a momentous occasion for the student, the committee, and the Divinity School as a whole. A public oral defense provides the student with a capstone experience by having the student articulate and defend the dissertation's contribution to knowledge in their area of specialization. The defense enables the student to engage their dissertation committee as colleagues and serves to demonstrate to other students in the Area and in the Divinity School a model of achievement and recognition. For these reasons, the Divinity School requires all doctoral students who matriculated in Summer 2016 and after to complete a public oral defense of the dissertation. Those Ph.D. students who entered the program before Summer 2016 may choose whether or not they have a dissertation defense, unless it was required by the Area prior to the new doctoral student handbook of Autumn 2019.

The Dissertation Reading Committee chair, in consultation with the student and the other committee members, is responsible for approving the scheduling of the defense. The date, time, and location of the defense should be shared with the Dean of Students Office to be announced to the Divinity School's community.

The Dean of Students collects provisional grades on the dissertation at least a week before the scheduled defense and shares them with the dissertation committee. The student, advisors, and committee members may participate in defenses via Skype, Zoom, or other virtual means if they are unable to do so physically.

At the beginning of the defense, the committee confers privately to develop questions of the candidate. The chair then introduces the candidate, who offers a 10-15-minute summary of their dissertation. The committee asks questions and offers comments, and the chair may invite questions or comments from the audience if time allows. The total time of the presentation and question and answer period should not exceed two hours. The committee then deliberates privately and informs the candidate of the result: Pass, Pass with Minor Revisions, Pass with Major Revisions, or Fail. The judgment of the committee is final, and the grade is not subject to review. A student who fails the dissertation defense is withdrawn from the program.

Before the defense, the Dean of Students sends to each committee member a dissertation evaluation form. Committee members use the form to offer their assessment of the dissertation and rank the student's work. If the committee unanimously ranks the dissertation as Superior, the student is awarded graduation with distinction, which is notated on the student's transcript. Dissertation evaluation forms are kept in the student's file in the Dean of Students office and are not shared with the student, though committee members are encouraged to send the student written feedback as well.

Final Submission

Students must submit a final version of their approved dissertation to the University Dissertation Office. Guidelines for formatting, and deadlines for submission of the final dissertation to the Dissertation Office, can be found at <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/research/scholar/Ph.D./>. Upon submission, the Dean of Students Office will confirm with the dissertation chair that the final dissertation has been approved by the dissertation committee. Once the Dean of Students Office confirms this, the Dissertation Office will review the dissertation to ensure that it meets all publication guidelines. The Dissertation Office will request any changes to dissertation's format as needed. Students must adhere to these requests before the dissertation is approved. The Dissertation

Office will confirm once the dissertation has been approved. The Dean of Students Office will not approve a student's application to graduate until the Dissertation Office has confirmed that the dissertation has met all the publication checks.

Ph.D. candidates who deposit the final version of their dissertation with the University Dissertation Office by the end of the first week of the quarter in which they intend to graduate may choose not to be registered as students for that quarter.

ANNUAL REVIEWS

To ensure that students receive overall guidance about their academic progress, the Divinity School conducts annual reviews of all its Ph.D. students, generally in the spring term. If students are on leave in the spring term, they should be reviewed in the next term in which they are enrolled. The annual review should only consider the progress toward milestone completion during their time of enrollment. Students are not expected to make progress toward program milestones while on leave.

Annual reviews are conducted by the student's Area of study (or the examiners specified in the student's Course of Study Petition if they are not affiliated with an Area), with participation by external examiners or dissertation committee members as appropriate in later stages of the program.

Annual reviews should be guided by the "key competencies" outlined at the beginning of this handbook as pertinent for the student's particular stage in the program and result in written feedback for the student. The Divinity School Committee on Degrees then reviews the student's academic progress.

Any student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress as evidenced by timely completion of the program milestones outlined above, or through assessment via annual student progress reviews, may be subject to academic probation or withdrawal from the program by the Committee on Degrees. Milestone deadlines may be extended when a student takes a Leave of Absence or for other reasons as specified in the University Student Manual (please consult the Dean of Students with questions). Failure to meet the terms of probation will result in the student's withdrawal from the program. A student who anticipates difficulty in completing any of these requirements in a timely fashion should discuss this with their Advisor, the Dean of Students and/or the Director of Doctoral Studies.

Year 1:

Review in year one occurs as the student's Course of Study Petition is approved. During this time the Area (or examiners if the student chooses not to affiliate with an Area) should also review the student's transcript and academic progress.

Year 2:

The Second-Year Progress Conference as described in detail above comprises the review in year two.

Year 3:

- For all Areas, except Bible and ASR, the third yearly review should occur after the student's oral examination. Since the oral examination includes an assessment of the student's

academic progress and look toward the dissertation, the year 3 annual review will focus on professional development and the PTP.

- If a student who is expected to take qualifying examinations in the third year does not complete them by that time, they may be placed on academic probation by the Committee on Degrees. To facilitate the Committee's deliberation, the Area along with any external examiners who will examine the student (or examiners if the student does not affiliate with an Area) will review the student's progress. The Area Chair will report on the results of the review to the Committee on Degrees.
- If a student is in Bible or ASR and thus is expected to take exams in the fourth year as indicated in the timetable outlined in the Second-Year Progress Conference, at the end of the third year they will undergo a review by their Area faculty with input from external examiners to ensure they are on track for timely completion of their exams and then degree. The Area chair will report on the results of the review to the Committee on Degrees. If the student is not making satisfactory progress, the Committee on Degrees may place them on academic probation or withdraw them from the program.

Year 4:

Reaching Candidacy by the end of year 4 is expected for students in all Areas except ASR and Bible. If students reach candidacy in Autumn or Winter of year 4, they should write a status update as described in the section for "years 5 and following" to describe their progress during the months since achieving candidacy. Students who achieve candidacy in the spring of year 4 should still write a status update as described below so they can discuss their professional development including but not limited to their progress regarding their Pedagogical Teaching Plan in addition to their dissertation proposal work, though we recognize that their proposal will suffice as an up-to-date statement of their dissertation goals.

Year 5 and following:

Each spring after achieving Candidacy, the Candidate will be required to write 1-2 pages describing what they have achieved in the previous year and a timeline of specific writing goals to achieve in the next year. This document is submitted to the Dissertation Committee with a copy sent to both the Director of Doctoral Studies and the Dean of Students. If any revisions to the student's timeline need to be made, they should be articulated through a Minor Petition to the Committee on Degrees. While the major focus of this document should be progress toward the dissertation, Candidates should also reflect upon their pedagogical training, teaching and other professional development plans.

In subsequent years of Candidacy, the review document should also reflect back on the student's previous plan of research and, if and when the Candidate did not meet the stated goals, reflect upon why. This statement will be reviewed by the Dissertation Committee at the Candidate's annual review. Their assessment of the candidate as well as the Candidate's academic record and statement will be reviewed by the Committee on Degrees. If warranted, the Candidate will be placed on academic probation or withdrawn from the program as described below.

During these annual reviews, attention should be paid to the Candidate's professional development as well as the progress toward the dissertation. See the list of key competencies above.

FUNDING

STUDENTS WHO MATRICULATED INTO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN SUMMER 2016 OR LATER ARE FUNDED THROUGH THE NEW MODEL.

The doctoral student fellowship package under The New Model includes a full tuition scholarship, annual living stipend, set for \$31,000 in the 2020-2021 academic year, and individual USHIP premium coverage. Student are financially responsible for the Graduate Student Services Fee, formally known as the Student Life Fee and the Lifetime Transcript Fee. This fellowship package extends for the duration of the program, with maximum registration of nine (9) years for students who matriculated during or after summer 2016 and before summer 2021, or seven (7) years for students that matriculated in Summer 2021 or later.

STUDENTS WHO MATRICULATED INTO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN 2015 ARE FUNDED THROUGH THE GRADUATE AID INITIATIVE (GAI).

The doctoral student fellowship package under the GAI includes a full tuition scholarship, annual living stipend, set at \$27,000 in the 2020-2021 academic year, and individual USHIP premium coverage for years 1-5. Students also receive \$4,000 summer stipends in years 1-3. Students who have achieved candidacy by the end of autumn quarter of their fifth year will have a sixth year of funding (full tuition scholarship, living stipend, and USHIP premium coverage) and will receive individual USHIP premium coverage in year 7. Students who enter candidacy by the end of year 5 will receive a fourth summer stipend and individual USHIP premium coverage in both years 6 and 7. Student are financially responsible for the Graduate Student Services Fee, formally known as the Student Life Fee and the Lifetime Transcript Fee.

STUDENTS WHO MATRICULATED INTO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN 2014 ARE FUNDED THROUGH THE GRADUATE AID INITIATIVE (GAI).

The doctoral student fellowship package under the GAI includes a full tuition scholarship, annual living stipend, set at \$27,000 in the 2020-2021 academic year, and individual USHIP premium coverage for years 1-5. Students also receive \$4,000 summer stipends in years 1-3. Students who achieve candidacy by the end of their fifth year of the program will have a sixth year of full funding (full tuition scholarship, living stipend, and USHIP premium coverage), along with continuation of individual USHIP premium coverage in years 6 and 7. Student are financially responsible for the Graduate Student Services Fee, formally known as the Student Life Fee and the Lifetime Transcript Fee.

TUITION AID FOR STUDENTS WHO MATRICULATED PRIOR TO SUMMER 2016

Quarterly tuition for doctoral students in years beyond the fourth year is \$7,112. For many years, the University Trustees have set a maximum out of pocket quarterly tuition rate of \$784. This means that the Divinity School provides \$6,328 in tuition aid every quarter for every doctoral student enrolled in their fifth year and beyond.

For some students, the Divinity School provides additional tuition aid to cover the \$784 out-of-pocket cost. These include students who are

- Receiving a Divinity School fellowship, such as the Marty Fellowships or Dissertation Completion Fellowships.

- Teaching in the Divinity School, the Division of the Social Sciences, or the Division of the Humanities (including the Writing Program), or the College in the quarter in which they are teaching.

Teaching assignments in the other professional schools, the Graham School and Laboratory School, in the Biological or Physical Sciences, other institutions (including University of Chicago Charter Schools), or while on exchange status, do not qualify for additional tuition aid from the Divinity School.

FELLOWSHIPS

Alma Wilson Teaching Fellowship

The Alma Wilson Teaching Fellowship offers doctoral students and candidates in the Divinity School the opportunity to design and teach a course of their own design in the University's Undergraduate Program in Religious Studies. Alma Wilson Fellows must complete the CCTE 50000- Course Design and College Teaching course before teaching the approved course.

The application is announced and opened in the Winter Quarter. Applications are reviewed by the Committee on Undergraduate Studies. Applicants can expect notifications by mid-March. For further information, please contact Professor Ryan Coyne, Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Language Teaching Prize

The Language Lectureship Teaching Prize offers doctoral students and candidates in the Divinity School the opportunity to design and teach the language sequences in Biblical Hebrew, Koine Greek, and Qur'anic Arabic. Students receiving the language lectureship prize must complete the 50100- Language Pedagogy for the Contemporary Classroom course before beginning to teach the sequence.

Marty Center Junior Fellowships

Marty Center Junior Fellows are Ph.D. candidates who have completed at least one chapter of their dissertation, selected by application from the various Areas of study within the Divinity School. Junior fellows are appointed for a full academic year and receive a supplemental stipend of \$3,000. They participate in a biweekly interdisciplinary seminar in the Winter and Spring quarters, as well as a daylong session with public interlocutors at the end of the academic year.

The application is announced and opened in the Spring Quarter. Applications are reviewed by the Committee on Degrees. Applicants can expect notifications by the end of June. For more information, please contact Professor Willemien Otten, Director of the Martin Marty Center.

Fellowships for Advanced Doctoral Students

The best resource at the University for advanced doctoral students seeking additional funding is the Fellowships Office at UChicagoGRAD. Students are encouraged to consult with a Fellowships Advisor there early in their academic careers to begin planning for fellowship applications.

Dissertation Completion Fellowships

For students who matriculated into the doctoral program in Summer 2016 or earlier: a number of one-year final year dissertation completion fellowships will be available annually to be awarded on a

competitive basis. These include the Harper, Mellon, and Provost fellowships, as well as Divinity School Final Year Dissertation Completion Fellowships.

Eligible candidates for these competitive Fellowships will have an approved dissertation proposal and at least one chapter of their dissertation complete. The purpose of the Final Year Dissertation Completion Fellowships is to enable students to finalize their dissertations and complete the degree. Hence, recipients may not engage in teaching or work at the University or outside while holding any of these fellowships, except with the permission of the Dean of Students. A student may hold either a Harper, Mellon, Provost, or Divinity School Final Year Dissertation Completion Fellowship during their degree program, but may not hold more than one of these fellowships. Additionally, after the fellowship term, the student is not eligible for further funding (from the Divinity School or the University) and will not be permitted to register. (In these circumstances, the student will still be able to complete their dissertation and graduate even if they are no longer registered, per existing University policy. See the [Student Manual](#) for additional details.) It is therefore important that students compete for these fellowships only in a year when they and their Advisors are confident that they can finish the dissertation within the year of the fellowship.

The Dissertation Competition Fellowships offer full tuition, individual USHIP premium coverage, coverage of the Student Services Fee, and the annual living stipend, currently \$31,000 for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The application for the Dissertation Completion Fellowships are announced and opened in the Winter Quarter. Applications are viewed by the Committee on Degrees. Applicants can expect notification in mid-May.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

THE COMMITTEE ON DEGREES

The faculty established the Committee on Degrees to oversee the degree programs of the Divinity School. The Committee monitors student progress through the formal requirements of the Divinity School's degree programs. The Committee normally responds to student petitions concerning the Ph.D. program, of which there are three types: 1) course of study petitions; 2) dissertation proposals; and 3) minor petitions requesting modification of a previously approved petition or, in rare instances, a degree requirement. Details about (1) and (2) are described above; minor petitions are discussed below.

The Committee has seven members. The Director of Doctoral Studies is a standing member and the chair of the Committee. The Associate Dean of Students is a standing member and is the committee's recorder; all administrative matters are handled by the Associate Dean of Students. Membership for the five faculty members rotates, with members serving a two-year term and representing diverse Areas in the School.

The Committee ordinarily meets twice in the Autumn Quarter and once each in the Winter and Spring Quarters. It may meet an additional time in Spring Quarter to assess fellowship applications. The Committee does not typically meet in the Summer Quarter but may do so if an extraordinary matter arises. The dates of meetings and the deadlines for submitting petitions may be obtained from the Dean of Students Office and on the Divinity School website.

Beginning in Autumn 2019: All petitions are submitted to the Dean of Students Office electronically using the form available on the Forms of Current Students [website](#). (Petitions will be forwarded by the Dean of Students Office to the student's advisor for approval before they are considered by the Committee on Degrees.) Course of Study Petitions and Dissertation Proposals must include a cover sheet that includes all required signatures. Petitions that do not observe the specified guidelines may not be reviewed by the Committee.

The Dean of Students communicates the decisions of the Committee by email, copying the student's Advisor. A copy of the email is added to the student's electronic file in the University Academic Information System.

Minor Petitions

Students may submit minor petitions for the following reasons: 1) to modify a previously approved Course of Study petition (exams, examiners, advisor, languages, PTP, or timeline); 2) to adjust the timeline of exams as specified in their Second Year Progress Conference report; 3) to make modifications to their dissertation committee or timeline, or 4) in rare instances, to petition to adjust a degree requirement or extend maximum registration. Any Minor Petition to make any of the above changes requires a statement of the existing (exams, examiners, advisor, languages, PTP element, timeline, or Area); a statement of the proposed change, and a rationale for the change, as well as signatures from the student, advisor, and relevant faculty (e.g. new examiner if one is changing examiners).

Students most frequently use minor petitions to change their qualifying examinations. Such a petition must include a listing of the approved set of exams, using the correct names and numbers of the exams as listed in the Divinity School Announcements, as well as a clear indication of the requested change. This summary statement should be accompanied by a rationale for the change.

To petition for a maximum registration extension students must submit a Minor Petition including a justification for the timeline extension and the external award letter and application materials for the award. It is recommended that students submit these petitions when receiving the external award.

In the case of a change in examiners or advisors, The Director of Doctoral Studies and/or the Dean of Students ensures that the prior examiner or advisor are aware of the change and facilitates any discussions indicated for a smooth transition.

Changing Area of Study

In some circumstances, a Ph.D. student who already has had the course of study petition approved by the Committee on Degrees may wish to change the academic focus of that program from one to another of the Divinity School Areas of Ph.D. study. Such a change requires the submission of a new course of study petition outlining the revised course of Ph.D. study, including the signature of the destination Area chair. The Director of Doctoral Studies and/or the Dean of Students ensures that the faculty of the Area from which the student is leaving are aware of the change and facilitates any discussions indicated for a smooth transition.

If a student desires to change from an Area to an ad hoc Area, the student should indicate their current Area, exams, examiners, and advisor as well as the ad hoc Area, advisor, exams, and examiners that they propose. The faculty listed as examiners in their Minor Petition will serve as the committee evaluating their yearly progress until the student reaches candidacy. The student should

provide a description of and an intellectual rationale structuring their course of study in this way, clearly communicating the student's understanding of the proposed Area of concentration and how the course of study described addresses the work of that Area. The student should also indicate why it is necessary to structure their course of study outside of an existing Area.

ACADEMIC PROBATION POLICY

The Divinity School Committee on Degrees reviews the academic progress of all doctoral students. Any student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress as evidenced by failing grades; failure to attain milestones as stipulated in this document or in the student's (1) Course of Study Petition, (2) Second-Year Review timeline, or (3) Dissertation Proposal; or through assessment via annual student progress reviews, may be subject to academic probation by the Committee on Degrees. If probation is warranted and administered, the student will be notified in writing by the Committee on Degrees regarding a) what is required to regain good academic standing and b) the deadline for doing so, normally 1-2 quarters. Failure to meet the terms of probation will result in the student's withdrawal from the program. A student may only be on probation once during their course of study. If a student who has already been on probation subsequently fails to achieve satisfactory academic progress a second time, the Committee on Degrees may withdraw the student from the program.

Of course, there are personal and/or medical situations that may require reconsideration of these milestone deadlines for students and candidates. These individual cases will be considered through the lens of University policies pertaining to leaves of absence, milestone extensions, and academic modification by the Dean of Students who will consult with the Director of Doctoral Studies and inform the Committee on Degrees about such extensions. The Committee on Degrees may also grant a milestone extension on its own authority.

APPLICATION TO THE PH.D. PROGRAM FOR M.A. AND M.DIV. STUDENTS

Students in their final year of the M.A. or M.Div. programs may apply for admission to the Ph.D. program. Students with only an A.M.R.S. may not apply for admission to the Ph.D. program unless they have a two-year master's degree in a relevant field. Admission to or completion of any of the masters-level programs does not guarantee admission to the Ph.D. program.

There is no internal petition system for M.A. or M.Div. students; all applicants to the Ph.D. program use the same application process and timeline, with the following exception: Students whose GRE scores expired during their time in the M.A. or M.Div. program may use their expired score in their Ph.D. application within two years of graduating from the M.A. or M.Div. program.

DUAL PH.D. PROGRAMS

Students in the Divinity School's Ph.D. program may apply to complete a joint Ph.D. program in another school or division of the University. To do so, the student should consult the departmental administrator and the Dean of Students office in the appropriate school or division as well as the Divinity School Dean of Students. As a rule, all requirements of both programs must be fulfilled, which normally necessitates additional coursework (though courses taken in the Divinity School may be counted towards coursework requirements in the other school or division, and vice versa), and completion of two sets of qualifying examinations, a combined PTP, and dissertation proposal colloquium for both departments. A single dissertation is produced, with a Divinity School faculty member chairing or co-chairing the dissertation committee.

Students in other schools and divisions of the university may likewise petition to pursue a joint Ph.D. program in the Divinity School. To do so, the student should consult the Divinity School Dean of Students and the Dean of Students in their home school or division. All requirements of both programs must be fulfilled (see paragraph above). Petitions for joint degrees from non-Divinity students must be approved by the faculty of the Area in which the student wishes to study and by the Divinity School's Committee on Degrees through the Course of Study Petition process.

As with all doctoral students, those who undertake a dual program must pay particular attention to their timeline for completion and should work closely with their Advisor to ensure that they stay on track. As part of their Course of Study petition, dual degree students must submit a timeline indicating their plans for each year of their programs.

TA APPOINTMENT PROCESS

TA Selection Guidelines

In selecting teaching assistants, the faculty have two important responsibilities: choosing the TAs best suited to supporting instruction in a given course or classroom, and providing the training opportunities to graduate students that they are required to fulfill under the terms of the GAI and/or PTP. In order to meet those dual responsibilities, appointments should be made based on applicant qualifications, with preference given to students that have not fulfilled the teaching requirements (until the PTP is fully implemented at which time students who have fulfilled their teaching requirements will not be able to TA).

Please see the PTP FAQs for questions about remuneration while holding a teaching position.

TA Appointment Process

The Dean's office publishes a call for applications on the Divinity School Ph.D. student listserv [N.B. This was formerly done by the Dean of Students office. Beginning Autumn 2019 it will be managed by the Dean's Office]. Applications will be reviewed by the faculty member teaching the course. Upon selection, the Dean's office sends a hire letter to the student and cc's the faculty member and Associate Dean for Finance Administration, who ensures that the student is appropriately entered into Workday, as well as the Dean of Students Office, which sees to any necessary adjustments to the student's stipend and ensures that the teaching points are accurately recorded in the student's record. The student may not begin work until all necessary documentation has been submitted.

CERTIFICATION IN RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP FOR PH.D. STUDENTS

Ph.D. students in the Divinity School with an interest in ministry may apply to complete a year of coursework and field work leading to the granting of a certificate in religious leadership. This program is intended for students whose ultimate educational and professional goals require scholarly attainment in one of the fields of religious studies, and who also desire the professional educational qualifications for religious leadership.

To complete this certificate, doctoral students must successfully complete the Arts of Ministry course sequence, the field education practicum and accompanying field placement, and major papers in religious thought, religious community, and a particular issue in religious life or leadership.

To enter the program, a student must have the consent of their academic advisor, the Director of Ministry Studies, and Committee on Degrees. Students must submit a minor petition to the Committee on Degrees prior to the desired certification year. Before receiving the certification, the student must complete all requirements for the Ph.D. degree, including the dissertation.

Students who matriculated before Summer 2016 must complete the requirements of the certificate within their 12-year maximum registration period. Students who have exhausted GAI funding will receive a \$2,000 per quarter field education stipend while holding the field placement. Students that matriculated during or after Summer 2016 but before Summer 2021 must complete requirements of the certificate within their 9-year maximum registration period. Students will receive an additional \$2,000 per quarter field education stipend while holding the field placement. Students that matriculate into the Ph.D. program in Summer 2021 or later must complete the requirements of the certificate within their 7-year maximum registration period. Students will receive a \$2,000 per quarter field education stipend while holding the field placement.

The requirements for the Certification in Religious Leadership are as follows:

1. Completion of nine approved courses:
 - A. Arts of Ministry in the autumn, winter, and spring quarters.
 - B. Three quarters of religious leadership and practice fieldwork and the Field Education Practicum Course.
 - C. Three courses in the history, theology, and/or philosophy of chosen tradition.
2. Submission of three papers on religious leadership to an examining committee. One paper must be an exposition of foundational theological or philosophical resources on which the student draws in conceptualizing and performing spiritual leadership. A second paper must develop a normative understanding of religious community in relation to the foundational position. A third paper must explore a problematic context within which the religious community exists and its work is performed. This paper may focus upon the personal, societal, or cultural dimensions of a problem. The student should select courses in addition to those in the Arts of Ministry sequence to assist in the preparation of these three papers.
3. Successful completion of an oral examination based on the above three papers. The oral examination will be conducted by a committee of at least four faculty members, including a chairperson. The examining committee may recommend additional requirements to be fulfilled by the student before awarding the Certification in Religious Leadership.

The Certification in Religious Leadership is conferred upon successful completion of the above program and the successful completion of all requirements for the Ph.D. degree, including the dissertation. In no case will the Certification in Religious Leadership be given to a student who fails to complete all requirements of the Ph.D. program.

RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES

The following recommendations for interactions between faculty and students aim to continue to enhance a culture of faculty support for students, calibrate expectations of and for students, and facilitate strong collaborations.

Meetings between advisors and advisees (face-to-face or virtually) at least once a quarter and preferably at least once a month. Regular opportunities to check in facilitate conceptual development and avoid long periods where a student's struggles compound due to lack of engagement. Advisors and advisees should have explicit conversations about their mutual expectations regarding the frequency and modes of communications, standards for drafts, and the information advisors will need to write letters of reference etc.

Students in coursework should discuss their potential classes with their advisor before each registration period.

Advisors and committee members should provide written feedback for chapter drafts and drafts of other written materials (e.g. job application documents), ideally within three weeks, with a two-week turn-around strongly recommended. Oral feedback is also helpful. Advisors should work with advisees on the writing style of dissertation chapter drafts, ensuring that committee members read polished work rather than rough drafts requiring substantial grammatical and stylistic editing.

Students applying for jobs or fellowships should give faculty members a two-week lead time to submit letters of reference. Faculty and students should come to clear agreement in advance about what information the faculty member needs in order to write a reference letter (CV, copy of student's cover letter, research and teaching statement, job ad, details of how to submit letters etc.).

Advisors and advisees should have regular conversations with advisees about professional development including the career path or paths the advisee is considering. These conversations should include topics typical to academic career paths publications, presentations, teaching etc. as well as the recognition that students may pursue other career paths for a variety of reasons. Both students and faculty should remember the resources of the UChicago Grad PATHS program regarding various types of careers a Ph.D. student can have.

Important Dates and Deadlines 2020-21

September

- 1 Autumn Quarter course offerings available in student portal
- 11 Deadline for matriculating students to submit final transcripts from previous institutions
- 21 Autumn Quarter Registration opens at 8:30 a.m.
- 23-25 Divinity School New Student Orientation
- 25 Divinity School Welcoming Ceremony
- 29 Autumn Quarter begin

October

- 2 Last day to:
 - apply to graduate in Autumn Quarter
 - add/drop courses
 - apply to take Ph.D. Qualifying Exams in Autumn Quarter
 - apply to take AMRS Exam in Autumn Quarter
 - submit Course of Study Petitions, Dissertation Proposals, and Minor Petitions for review by the Committee on Degrees meeting in Week 3
- 12-16 Week 3: Committee on Degrees Meeting (TBD)
- 14 Last day to request Autumn Quarter registration changes through the Dean of Students Office
- 16 Deadline to request waiver of Autumn Quarter Graduate Student Services Fee (see Bursar's website)
- 26 Ph.D. Students: Qualifying Exams period begins
- 30 2020-2021 USHIP waiver due (see Student Health website)

November

- 2 Winter Quarter courses available in student portal
- 12 Ph.D. Students: Oral Exams period begins
- 13 Last day to:
 - Ph.D. Students: Submit dissertations to the Dissertation Office for Autumn Quarter graduation.
 - Faculty: Submit dissertation evaluation forms to the Dean of Students Office for Autumn Quarter graduates.
- 16 Winter Quarter Registration opens at 8:30a.m.
- 20 Ph.D. Students: Deadline to submit Course of Study Petitions, Dissertation Proposals, and Minor Petitions for review by the Committee on Degrees end of quarter meeting.
- 23-27 Thanksgiving Break- Classes Cancelled | Study Week
- 27 Past due grades from previous quarters due
- 30 All instruction resumes online through December 12

December

- 4 Grades due for Autumn Quarter graduates
- 7-11 Committee on Degrees Meeting (TBD)
- 11 End of Autumn Quarter
- 16 Autumn Quarter grades due for non-graduating students

January

- 4 Winter Quarter begins
- 8 Last day to:
 - apply to graduate in Winter Quarter
 - add/drop courses
 - apply to take Ph.D. Qualifying Exams in Winter Quarter
 - apply to take AMRS Exam in Winter Quarter
- 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – University closed
- 20 Last day to request Winter Quarter registration changes through the Dean of Students Office
- 22 Deadline to request waiver of Autumn Quarter Graduate Student Services Fee (see Bursar's website)

February

- 1 Ph.D. Students: Qualifying exams period begins
- 8 Spring Quarter courses available online in the student portal
- 18 Ph.D. Students: Oral Exams period begins
- 19 Last day to:
 - Ph.D. Students: Submit dissertations to the Dissertation Office for Winter Quarter graduation.
 - Faculty: Submit dissertation evaluation forms to the Dean of Students Office for Winter Quarter graduates.
- 22 Spring Quarter registration at 8:30a.m.
- 26 Ph.D. Students: Deadline to submit Course of Study Petitions, Dissertation Proposals, and/or Minor Petitions for review by the Committee on Degrees for the Winter Quarter meeting.

March

- 1 Annual Reports sent to Doctoral Students
- 5 Past Due Grades from previous quarters due
- 13 Grades due for Winter Quarter graduates
- 15-19 Committee on Degrees Meeting (TBD)
- 20 Winter Quarter ends
- 29 Spring Quarter begins

April

- 2 Ph.D. Students: Annual Reports due to Dean of Students Office
- 5 Winter Quarter grades due
- 2 Last day to:
 - apply to graduate in Spring Quarter
 - add/drop courses
 - apply to take Ph.D. Qualifying Exams in Spring Quarter
 - apply to take AMRS Exam in Spring Quarter
- 12 Faculty: Annual Reports sent to Faculty
- 14 Last day to request Spring Quarter registration changes through the Dean of Students Office
- 16 Deadline to request waiver of Spring Quarter Graduate Student Services Fee (see Bursar's website)

26 Ph.D. Students: Qualifying Exams period begins

May

7 Faculty: Annual Reviews distributed to Area Chairs

11 Ph.D. Oral Exams period begins; Ph.D. Students receive Spring Quarter progress reports for review

14 Last day to:

- Ph.D. Students: Submit dissertations to the Dissertation Office for Winter Quarter graduation.
- Faculty: Submit dissertation evaluation forms to the Dean of Students Office for Winter Quarter graduates.

28 Past Due Grades from previous quarters due

31 Memorial Day – University Closed

June

2 Faculty: Area letters due to Dean of Students Office

4 Ph.D. Students: Deadline to submit dissertation proposals, minor petitions, and Course of Study petitions to the Committee on Degrees for consideration at Spring Quarter meeting

5 Grades due for Spring Quarter graduates

11 Divinity School Graduation Ceremony

12 University Convocation ceremony

15 Spring quarter grades due for non-graduating students

21-25 Committee on Degrees Meeting (TBD)

22 Summer Quarter begins

26 Deadline to apply to graduate in Summer Quarter through my.uchicago

26 Area letters distributed to students (after Committee on Degrees Meeting)

Recommended Typical Pattern of Study

Year	Major Curricular Components	
		<i>Students in PR, HC, HJ, HR, IS, RAME, RETH, RLV, THEO</i>
1	Coursework: Usually a minimum of 2 courses per quarter Language work as indicated Course of Study Petition submitted by end of Spring Quarter	
2	Coursework: Usually a minimum of 2 courses per quarter Language work as indicated Second-Year progress conference with Area faculty in Spring Quarter	
3	Exam preparation TA 1 or 2 courses, often at least one in the Writing Center	
	Qualifying Exams by end of year	Third year review
4	Develop dissertation proposal and secure approval by end of Spring Quarter	Qualifying Exams Develop dissertation proposal
	TA 1 or 2 courses	
5		Secure approval of dissertation proposal by end of Autumn Quarter
	Write dissertation Serve as instructor of record for one course	
6 (&7)	Write dissertation Midpoint review Defend dissertation and deposit with Dissertation Office	

For further information
about any of the policies and procedures
outlined in this handbook, please contact:

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or

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