

## **Guidelines for ASR PhD Students**

### **General Requirements**

For details on general PhD requirements, please consult the following links:

<http://divinity.uchicago.edu/doctoral-program-phd/>

<http://divinityannouncements.uchicago.edu/div/degreeprogramsandrequirements/>

### **Progress Conference format**

The progress (or pre-exam) conference is normally held in the spring quarter of the second year, or the fall of the third year. In Anthropology and Sociology of Religion (ASR), the progress conference is held with the student's panel of examiners for the qualifying examinations, and will normally include assessment of coursework to date, cogency of the course of study petition, readiness for qualifying examinations, and development of the dissertation project. Students should also prepare a 15-20 pp. double-spaced paper and a cover letter for pre-circulation to members of the pre-exam conference committee at least 3-4 weeks before the conference. Prior to the meeting, students should have discussed their exam topics with their examiners, but reading lists do not need to be finalized. Following the conference, a report from the advisor and a timeline for the qualifying examinations is submitted to the Dean of Students. Soon after the conference, students should begin to develop their readings lists for all their exams in consultation with their examiners.

### **Qualifying Examinations**

Students must consult their advisors when choosing all four fields of examination.

Completion of the qualifying examinations normally takes place by the end of the third year of full-time residence. Language exams and the pre-exam conference must be successfully completed to be eligible to take qualifying exams.

PhD students in ASR are required to take four written exams:

- two exams in ASR;
- one exam in another area of the Divinity School;
- one exam in a field of the student's choice (either in ASR or another area of the Divinity School)

Students must choose faculty members to administer each of the exams in such a way that there are at least three Divinity School faculty members (Core and Associate faculty), including at least two ASR Core faculty members (Doostdar and Heo) involved in the examinations as a whole. If students wish to have a non-Divinity School, outside faculty member on an exam, a Divinity School faculty member must be a co-examiner on the exam. The co-examiner may also administer one other exam. Students are fully responsible for contacting all desired examiners and obtaining their agreement to supervise a written exam.

Each written exam is four hours long, open book. The oral exam is three hours long. For the oral exam, we require a research paper for pre-circulation to the committee members.

This research paper should be based on original research that is related to the dissertation topic. Original research includes fieldwork, archival and media research; a literature review is not sufficient. 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. Successful completion of the qualifying exams requires passing grades on the written exams, the research paper, and the oral exam.

\* If you are an internal PhD applicant, you will have to list four exams and examiners in your application. Feel free to list your exams and examiners without obtaining formal permission from faculty members. If you are admitted into the PhD program, you may plan and finalize your exams in close consultation with your PhD advisor.

The ASR faculty are:

- Alireza Doostdar (Core)
- Angie Heo (Core)
- Hussein Agrama (Associate)
- William Mazzarella (Associate)
- Omar McRoberts (Associate)
- Stephan Palmié (Associate)
- Jenny Trinitapoli (Associate)

The ASR exams are:

- ASR1 Anthropology of Religion
- ASR2 Special Topic (of student's choice in consultation with examiner)
- ASR3 Another special area or thematic exam (of student's choice in consultation with examiner)

For all ASR exams, PhD students must consult their examiners to construct a bibliography that focuses on themes of their choice. Advisors may modify reading selections and volume based on students' interests and research projects. A good resource to consult for designing a reading list is the journal publication *Annual Review of Anthropology*.

The following is a sample list of thematic clusters to give a general idea of what previous ASR students have read for their exams.

### **Classics in the Anthropology of Religion**

Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society

Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life

Mauss, The Gift and A General Theory of Magic

Douglas, Purity and Danger

Turner, The Ritual Process and The Forest of Symbols

Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

Geertz, The Interpretation of Culture

Asad, Genealogies of Religion  
Bourdieu, Outline of a theory of practice

### **Nationalism and Religion**

Anderson, Imagined Communities  
Van der Veer and Lehmann, Nation and Religion  
Hobsbawm and Ranger, The Invention of Tradition  
Gellner, Nations and Nationalism  
Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed  
Chatterjee, The Nation and its Fragments

### **Magic, Science, Rationality**

Malinowski, Magic, Science, and Religion  
Tambiah, Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality  
Levy-Bruhl, How Natives Think  
Evans-Pritchard, Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande  
Tylor, Religion in Primitive Culture

### **Religion, Media, Public Sphere**

Habermas, Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere  
Warner, Publics and Counterpublics  
Meyer, Religion, Media and the Public Sphere  
Stolow, Religion and/as Media  
Hirschkind, Ethical Soundscape  
de Vries, Religion and Media

### **Ritual and Embodiment**

Foucault, Technologies of the Self  
Hadot, Philosophy as a way of Life  
Turner, The Ritual Process and The Forest of Symbols  
Bourdieu, Outline of a theory of practice  
Mahmood, Politics of Piety

### **Colonialism, Postcolonialism and Religion**

Comaroff and Comaroff, Of Revelation and Revolution (2 volumes)  
Chatterjee, The Nation and its Fragments  
Viswanathan, Outside the Fold  
van der Veer, Imperial Encounters  
Chakrabarty, The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital  
Said, Orientalism

### **Secularism and Secularization**

Taylor, A Secular Age  
Casanova, Public Religions in the Modern World  
Asad, Formations of the Secular  
Agrama, Questioning Secularism

Updated 5.6.19

Anidjar, Secularism

Mahmood, Religious Difference in a Secular Age

Fernando, The Republic Unsettled

Bhargava, Secularism and its Critics

### **Religion and Economy**

Mauss, The Gift

Munn, Fame of Gawa

Marx, The German Ideology and The Fetishism of Commodities

Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

Miller, Materiality