THE ACADEMIC
STUDY OF RELIGION

The University of Chicago Divinity School

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ABOUT US

The University of Chicago Divinity School is a tough-minded, sprawling, rigorous, and dynamic conversation about what religion is and why understanding it is so vitally important. At the Divinity School, we believe serious inquiry into the subject of religion requires a university context where all ideas are subject to uncompromising standards of argument and evidence.

Located in the heart of campus, the Div School is a graduate-professional school for the academic study of religion. The dominant ethos of the school is toward the cultivation of new knowledge through research. The PhD and masters programs are taught by the same faculty, and faculty and students engage in pursuit of knowledge about the human phenomenon of religion as viewed from the broadest possible range of perspectives. We train students for all kinds of roles which require thinking and speaking about religion in a manner that is deeply informed, rigorously critical, and honestly engaged.

The Divinity School and the University represent an unparalleled depth of expertise in world religions (Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism), throughout their historical periods, and other religious movements, past and present.

CORE ELEMENTS

The Master of Arts in Religious Studies

The Master of Arts in Religious Studies (AMRS) is a concentrated program in the academic study of religion for those in other fields or professions (e.g., law, medicine, business, journalism, the arts) or anyone who seeks greater knowledge of and sophistication in the study of religion.

The degree may be pursued on a full- or part-time basis for up to three years, allowing students to balance study with existing professional commitments, and is ideal for international students who would like to complete a degree in one year. AMRS students complete a minimum of nine courses and a degree colloquium.

Admission

We offer rolling admission to this unique program, and students may matriculate in Autumn, Winter, or Spring quarter. In each case, the application deadline is the Friday of the third week of the quarter preceding the quarter of matriculation. Contact the Divinity School’s Coordinator for Recruiting and Admissions, John Howell, at divinityadmissions@uchicago.edu for more information.

Sample Courses of Study

- The histories, texts, thought, and practices of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism
- Religion and the arts
- Religious ethics and globalization
- Law, religion, and secularism

WHAT STUDENTS HAVE TO SAY

“As a student in the AMRS program I confronted different questions — even eternal questions — ones which have few or no sure solutions but which needed to be asked and considered critically in any event.”

— Judith Sherwin, alumna

“What enormous enrichment the school has brought to my life for whatever my further pursuits may be!”

— Paul Higdon, alumnus

“My studies at the Divinity School are providing me with the language, frames of reference, and context in which to discuss what religion is, and how traditions, texts, and religious practices are influential. They have helped me develop a path of inquiry into the role that religious communities . . . play in shaping current events and how they can be engaged in a constructive dialogue.”

— Rachel Graaf Leslie, alumna

“I chose the Divinity School for its demonstrated commitment to ethics, interdisciplinary character, and the value its committees clearly place on civic engagement with the many occasions offered to exchange pedagogical wisdom.”

— Jessi Choe, AMRS student