RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(PH.D.)

Requirements
Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REGR 6140</td>
<td>Curriculum and Religious Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGR 6180</td>
<td>Religious and Educational Development of Children and Youth</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGR 8102</td>
<td>Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Religious Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGR 8120</td>
<td>Education for Peace and Justice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGR 8401</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGR 8580</td>
<td>Young Adult / Adult Ministry and Education</td>
<td>3</td>
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Electives

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three Religious Education electives</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two general electives</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three other area electives</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Graduate School of Education electives</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
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Dissertation

Once coursework is complete, the student must enroll in Dissertation Direction (ZZGR 8090) each fall and spring until graduation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZZGR 8040 Dissertation Qualifying Paper</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZZGR 8084 Dissertation Format Review</td>
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Total Credits 48

Prerequisites

Students with insufficient background in theology or religious studies may be required to take additional courses, increasing the total number of required credits as necessary.

Dissertations

The Ph.D.'s chief goal is the advancement of original scholarship in religious education for the sake of church, academy, and society. The Ph.D. program provides research training in a manner that fosters the development of independent research skills. These skills include the capacity to formulate a significant problem, to develop mastery of appropriate conceptual and methodological skills, and to relate the research topic to the broader framework of knowledge in religious education. The doctoral dissertation provides evidence of a contribution to knowledge with a high level of originality.

A dissertation is an extended written study of a stated subject, based on original research and independent inquiry. It is a written report and analysis of data collected through careful and thorough research of all available sources relevant to the chosen topic. It embodies the results of critical reflection and questioning. It is both investigative and evaluative.

Dissertations vary in their data collection procedures. Some involve library-based. Others involve the use of questionnaires, interviews, and observation. These are primarily field-based. Many studies use a combination of both approaches.

The dissertation is the distinguishing characteristic of the Ph.D. degree, and the quality of the dissertation is a primary hallmark of the quality of a doctoral program.

Mentor

Students choose dissertation mentors from among the core GRE religious education faculty. In consultation with their mentors, they identify two proposed readers based on the topic and scope of their research.

Dissertation Committee

Students must submit the form “Proposed Members of the Dissertation Committee” (available in the Resources section), together with a dissertation thesis statement, and a brief rationale for the selection of mentors and readers. Committee approval requires a majority vote of the core religious education faculty.

Dissertation Proposal

The proposal is a formal document. It should be typed, double-spaced, and professional looking.

The proposal should make clear exactly what it is the student proposes to do. In other words, it should answer the following questions: What is the issue to be studied? Why is it important to do so? How will it be studied? What contribution will such a study make to our knowledge and understanding of the field of religious education?

The proposal must demonstrate the use of a sound methodology, give evidence of a thorough study of a special field, and show how the researcher will make an original contribution to the field of religious education.

The proposal could be structured as follows:

1. **Introduction**: description of the problem, issue, or research question to be dealt with, why the student considers it important, what the student has to say that has not been stated by others, and how the student proposes to contribute to the solution or answer.

2. **Proposal**: the problem, issue, or research question, along with a statement of the research question to be answered.

3. **Methodology**: description of the research methods to be used.

4. **Literature Review**: review of the existing literature related to the research question.

5. **Results**: expected results of the research.

6. **Discussion**: implications of the results, and how they contribute to the field of religious education.

7. **Conclusion**: summary of the proposal and its significance.

8. **References**: list of sources cited in the proposal.

9. **Appendices**: any additional information that supports the proposal.

Updated: 10-20-2023
(2) Background: why the student chose the problem, issue, or research questions, or the pastoral, historical, or social context of the problem, issue, or research questions, or both.

(3) Thesis Statement: may take the form of hypotheses to be tested, questions to be answered, or objectives to be achieved

(4) Purpose and Significance: topics to be explored in addressing the problem, issue or research questions, and how the research will contribute to scholarship, especially scholarship in religious education.

(5) Methodology: how the student proposes to collect and analyze data, what the relevant sources of information are, and how they will be obtained.

(6) Design/Organization of the Study: tentative chapter titles and summaries of the contents of each chapter.

(7) Bibliography: a preliminary listing in correct bibliographic form of books and articles relevant to the thesis.

A great deal of thinking, planning, and writing are advisable in the presentation of the dissertation proposal. A well-written proposal may, with some modification, serve as the first chapter of the dissertation.

Dissertation Proposal Hearing
A student’s dissertation proposal must receive formal approval before the student undertakes the writing of her or her dissertation. Formal approval comes after an oral hearing of the proposal before the student’s doctoral dissertation committee.

Scheduling Proposal Hearings
A student’s dissertation committee must be approved by the religious education area and dean before the student’s dissertation proposal hearing can be scheduled.

- Students’ proposal hearings can be scheduled no earlier than their final semester of coursework.
- Proposal hearings are scheduled by mentors in consultation with the director.
- Public announcements of proposal hearings are made at least one week in advance of a hearing.

The mentor, in consultation with the director and the assistant dean, checks to ensure that all coursework requirements have been fulfilled before a proposal hearing is scheduled. Additionally, the proposal hearing may not be conducted until all grades of “Incomplete” are satisfied and all financial obligations have been met.

Fordham Institutional Review Board (IRB) Review
All Ph.D. dissertation research involving human subjects (including interviews, focus groups, and surveys) is subject to review and approval by the Fordham Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB strives to ensure that (1) subjects are not placed at undue risk; and (2) that subjects provide un-coerced, informed consent to participate in a research study. IRB review also helps to protect the validity of the researchers’ findings. For current IRB policies, procedures, and submission deadlines, see http://www.fordham.edu/academics/office_of_research/institutional_review/
space) above the first line of printing and just inside the right margin; that is, approximately 5/8 to 3/4 inch from the top and one inch from the right side.

**FONT:** The point size of the font should be 12. If proportional spacing is used, the average number of characters per inch (CPI) should not exceed 15. No pencil marks are allowed. If special symbols are required, the symbols within a word processing package should be used. If the needed symbols hand-lettered, black ink must be used. No press-on (transfer) letters are allowed.

**PRINT:** A laser printer should be used.

**CORRECTIONS:** Excess white-outs or corrections (erasures, etc.) are not allowed. Students should reprint the entire page.

### 3. Arrangement

1. **Title Page**
2. **Dedication or Acknowledgements (if used)**
3. **Table of Contents**
4. **Preface (if used)**
5. **Introduction**
6. **Chapters**
7. **Conclusion**
8. **Bibliography**
9. **Appendices**
10. **Abstract (no pagination)**
11. **Vita (no pagination)**

### Guidelines for Graduation and Dissertation Defenses

1. A doctoral candidate planning to graduate in any given semester must register for graduation online by the date indicated in the academic calendar. If the candidate fails to register for graduation or fails to complete pending requirements, the degree will be awarded the following semester. In this case, the student must reapply for graduation in a timely way. If this occurs, the student must register for Maintenance for the semester directly preceding the conferral of the degree according to the continuous enrollment policy. Students who receive September degrees must be registered for the summer session immediately preceding the conferral of their degrees.

2. Candidates must be registered for Dissertation Mentoring during the semester in which they have their oral defense. Failure to register properly will delay approval for graduation.

3. When the dissertation is completed, one copy is given to each committee member for review. The dissertation committee will approve the dissertation when it meets all substantive standards established by the academic community and the format requirements of the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education.

4. When the committee members have approved the dissertation, each of them will sign an “Approval of Written Dissertation” form.

5. The “Approval of Written Dissertation” forms will be collected by the mentor and given to the director.

6. The director will notify the assistant dean that a candidate has completed their dissertation. The assistant dean will then check to make sure that the student’s transcript, Degree Works graduation checklist, and financial account are up to date.

7. The candidate will submit one hard copy of the dissertation to the director and email a PDF of the dissertation to the assistant dean. The review cannot begin until the student is registered for dissertation format review and cleared by the assistant dean. The assistant dean will submit the hard copy of the dissertation to the format review editor. Format review assures that the document meets all formatting and stylistic requirements of the GRE and is ready for publication. During the format review, every page of the manuscript, including the introductory material and reference section, is reviewed thoroughly. If the review is returned as unacceptable, the student will have to resubmit for, register and pay for, and review once again.

When the dissertation is returned from the format review editor, the assistant dean will notify the student by email. The student is responsible to retrieve the dissertation and complete all of the indicated corrections.

Because of the number of dissertations submitted each semester and the significant amount of time it takes to review each one, deadlines for submission and approval of dissertations by mentors and readers will be strictly adhered to; these deadlines are posted in the academic calendar each semester.

Dissertations are reviewed in the order in which they are received. The earlier a dissertation is submitted for review, the more likely a student will be approved for graduation. If a dissertation does not meet the standards of the GRE in the semester in which the oral defense was conducted, the candidate will incur additional charges to register for the next semester and will also need to register for the following graduation.

8. The director will make sure that the mentor has a Ph.D. Summary Sheet and a GRE Degree Certification Form. The mentor will complete these forms and submit them to the director. The director will keep copies of the forms for their files and submit copies to the assistant dean.

9. The director and mentor will work with the assistant dean to make sure that the completion of all degree requirements for the candidate is recorded in DegreeWorks.

10. Once the format review is complete, a check has been made to ensure that the student’s financial account is up to date, and a check has been made to ensure that the student’s DegreeWorks profile is complete, the Office of the Dean will be notified and the Office of the Dean will schedule the defense.

11. An announcement of the defense (including the time, place, and examiners) must be posted two weeks in advance of the defense.

12. Before the dissertation defense, the director will provide the mentor with the dissertation ballots and the materials the candidate will need to complete before presenting their dissertation to the dean.

The defense will be chaired by the assistant dean or another designate of the dean. The chair of the oral defense, who is not on the committee, represents the University at this formal session. The
chairperson is charged with protecting the candidate's rights to a fair and appropriate academic assessment and to protect the University's right to conduct a formal assessment of this major doctoral work. The chairperson facilitates the meeting and may participate in the questioning and discussion. However, neither the chairperson nor any other individuals outside the committee votes on the outcome of the defense.

13. The oral defense will focus chiefly on the dissertation research and its impact in the field in which the research was conducted. Immediately following the defense, the committee will evaluate the candidate's research and performance. The outcome of this evaluation will be one of four ratings: (1) Passed, (2) Passed contingent upon minor modifications of dissertation document, (3) Passed but with major revisions (e.g., content), (4) Not acceptable at this time. If changes are required, the candidate will be given a specific time frame in which to make the modifications and submit the revisions to the committee. Failure to meet that deadline may result in the requirement of registration for another semester.

**After successful completion of the oral defense and final corrections are approved by mentors and the dean:**

1. Email a PDF copy of your dissertation to the assistant dean.
2. Email an extra copy of the title page to the assistant dean.
3. Submit your thesis or project online in ProQuest following the instructions in the Clearance and Commencement section of the bulletin. Please copyright your work in ProQuest before completing the submission process.

**Qualifying Papers**
The purpose of the qualifying paper (QP) is to demonstrate the candidate's knowledge, aptitude, and readiness for doctoral research.

- The qualifying paper should demonstrate the necessary skills for conducting sustained research and writing at the professional level. In particular, a QP should (i) make plain the motivation for the choice of topic; (ii) show a thorough knowledge of the relevant literature and lines of argumentation; (iii) show an ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate positions and arguments and to formulate and defend an original thesis; (iv) handle references in the style of any leading academic journal.

- Qualifying papers should give strong evidence that a student is willing and able to produce a publishable paper. This means that the paper could contribute to the ongoing literature on the topic covered. A contribution to the literature can be made, for example, by
  - presenting an argument among several writers and entering the discussion with one's own view;
  - tracing historically some concept that is then modified or used to address a contemporary issue;
  - providing an illuminating account about a religious educator's arguments or contentions.

- Any paper written while its author was a student in the doctoral program may be submitted as a qualifying paper. The paper may be the result of reworking a research paper from a course. While a paper written for a course may be submitted as a qualifying paper, only rarely will an unrevised version be good enough to meet the standards the faculty applies in evaluating qualifying papers.

**Length**
Qualifying papers must be 4,500 to 5,000 words.

**Formatting**
Qualifying papers are to be typed and double-spaced according to the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Papers should be proofread before submission.

**Schedule**
A qualifying paper must be submitted and approved no later than the fifth semester of a student's program of study (excluding summer semesters).

**Evaluation and Approval**
To start the QP process, students should submit to the director of the Ph.D. program a petition to appoint a mentor and reader. A mentor must be a core member of the GRE religious education faculty. All GRE core faculty members may serve as a reader.

When the final paper is judged to be acceptable by both readers, it is approved.

- Those who fail to meet the qualifying paper requirement will be dismissed from the program.
- If the qualifying paper is approved, the student is required to submit a copy of the qualifying paper with a signed title page to the religious education area coordinator. A copy of the signed title page will be placed in the student's file.
- In all cases, the qualifying paper should be approved before the student's dissertation proposal hearing.

Qualifying papers cannot be accepted until all grades of Incomplete are removed and changed to a final grade.