

MA GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
for the
Department of Religion

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
University of Georgia

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Department of Religion
Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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WELCOME

This MA Handbook is your guide to the policies and practices of graduate study within the Department of Religion in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Georgia. Its intent is to help smooth your pathway in the program and call attention to issues that you need to be aware of at different stages of your MA studies.

1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact information for the Department of Religion:

Dr. Derrick Lemons, Department Head
Room 9 Peabody Hall
dlemons@uga.edu

The Department Head, in collaboration with the Graduate Faculty, has the responsibility of oversight for all departmental academic programs and activities, including the MA and PhD programs.

Dr. Ingie Hovland, Director of Graduate Studies
Room 19 Peabody Hall
ingiehovland@uga.edu

The Director of Graduate Studies, under appointment of the Department Head and in collaboration with the Graduate Faculty, has direct supervision over the graduate MA and PhD programs.

Emily Arruda, Administrative Assistant
Room 3 Peabody Hall
emily.arruda@uga.edu, 706-542-5356

The Administrative Assistant assists with office matters including office keys, building access, the printer/copier, the supply closet, maintaining mailboxes and listservs, scheduling classrooms, and assisting with class registration (e.g. helping with overrides).

2. THE DEPARTMENT

OFFICES

The Department endeavors to provide a desk in one of the graduate student offices in Peabody Hall to all graduate students who need one. If you are given keys to an office, please keep the room locked at all times when you are not in the room. Please plan to bring your own laptop to work on. You also have free access to general use computers in the Main Library next to Peabody Hall.

The exterior doors to Peabody Hall are unlocked Monday through Friday from roughly 7:00AM-7:30PM. Also note that the building is locked on holidays when UGA is closed. If you wish to access the building after regular business hours or on weekends, you should be able to do so with your UGA ID card (if this does not work, please speak with the office staff).

Every graduate student will have a mailbox in the Department's main office (Peabody Hall, room 3). Access to the main office outside business hours will require a key and your UGA ID card.

The main office leads into the Department's conference room (room 3D). The conference room is sometimes occupied for meetings, but at other times, you are welcome to make yourself coffee in the conference room and to meet there with fellow graduate students.

SUPPLIES AND THE COPIER/PRINTER

Supplies in the supply closet (room 3B) are for Teaching Assistant use in the classroom. Do not supply your students in the classroom with paper, pens, etc.

Faculty, office staff, and Religion graduate students are allowed to use the copier/printer and other office equipment in the main office (room 3). Copy codes for the copy machine will be assigned by the office staff, who can also provide instructions for how to print, copy, or scan. Please keep copying to a limit. If you are making excessive copies your privileges will be revoked.

GRADUATE STUDENT LISTSERV

The Department of Religion maintains a graduate student listserv (RELIGIONGRAD-L) which you will be subscribed to. The Department Head, Director of Graduate Studies, and office staff will communicate to you through this listserv, which will go to your UGA email account.

COLLOQUIA AND SPECIAL SPEAKERS

The Department of Religion will have departmental colloquia and guest speakers sponsored by our department as well as speakers who will be co-sponsored by the department throughout the academic year. As a Religion graduate student, you are strongly encouraged to attend these events as part of your educational experience. If you are on an assistantship, you are required to attend the events as part of your assistantship award agreement.

ASSISTANTSHIPS

Each year the faculty will meet during the Fall and Spring semesters to discuss and make decisions

regarding Graduate Student Teaching Assistantships for the following year. Assistantships are awarded only to students actively pursuing a graduate degree in Religion and are normally awarded for a full academic year at a time. All full-time graduate students are reviewed for Assistantship awards, but our funds are limited. Terms of an assistantship will be outlined in an award letter. Students are expected to show reasonable progress toward degree requirements, to satisfy university and departmental requirements concerning selection of a major professor, approval of program of study, etc., and to perform their assigned assistantship duties as outlined by the Department and in a professional manner. Failure to abide by the terms of the assistantship could cause loss of part or all of the assistantship. It is the general policy of the Department not to extend financial assistance to Master's level graduate students beyond their second year in the program.

3. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR AN MA IN RELIGION

Each candidate for a graduate degree in the Department of Religion must meet all requirements for the degree and comply with all policies set out by the Graduate School. It is your responsibility to be familiar with these requirements and policies. This Handbook does not replace the Graduate School policies. If you encounter any discrepancy between Department policies and Graduate School policies, please consult the Director of Graduate Studies.

RESIDENCY AND CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

The minimum residency requirement for an MA degree is two semesters.

In addition, all enrolled students pursuing graduate degrees at UGA must maintain continuous enrollment from matriculation (when they enter the program) until completion of all degree requirements. Continuous enrollment is defined as registering for a minimum of 3 graduate hours in at least two out of three semesters per academic year (the three semesters are Fall, Spring, Summer). Thesis-writing Master's students who have satisfactorily completed all required courses (exclusive of 7000 and 7300) will be allowed to register at a tuition rate equivalent to the prevailing in-state tuition rate. If registration eligibility is lost, students must reapply to their programs and pay the applicable application fee to continue graduate study.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Once a student has entered the MA program, the student, in consultation with their major professor, will choose a faculty advisory committee. The student must file the proper advisory committee form with the Graduate School. The form can be accessed at <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>.

The MA advisory committee consists of at least three members, including the major professor, all of whom agree to serve on the committee. The major professor and at least one other committee member must be members of the UGA graduate faculty in the Religion Department. In some cases, the third member may be drawn from outside the department. (Changes may be made in the advisory committee during a student's time in the program.)

The advisory committee, in consultation with the student, is charged with planning the student's program of study. It is also charged with approving the program of study, approving a subject for the thesis, reading and approving the completed thesis, and administering and approving the thesis defense. The major professor has the primary responsibility for guiding your research, but you should consult all members of the advisory committee to draw upon their expertise in relevant areas.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

An MA student, in consultation with their major professor and advisory committee, must complete a program of study (a list of courses) which constitutes a logical whole. The recommended program of study is laid out on a Program of Study form. The form can be accessed at <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>.

The courses listed in the Program of Study for an MA in Religion must fulfill the following coursework requirements. All courses will be chosen only with the approval of the major professor.

GradFIRST Seminar:

All UGA graduate students are required to take a GradFIRST seminar in their first year to introduce them to graduate study at UGA:

GRSC 7001 GradFIRST seminar, 1 hr.

Note: On the MA program of study, the GradFIRST seminar (GRSC 7001) is listed separately under “GradFIRST requirement” and does not count toward the total number of hours.

Teaching Seminar:

All UGA graduate students on a Teaching Assistantship are required to take a teaching seminar:

RELI 7770 Teaching Seminar, 1-3 hrs. (or GRSC 7770 or an equivalent UGA pedagogy seminar)

Note: On the MA program of study, the teaching seminar (RELI 7770, GRSC 7770, or equivalent) is listed separately under “Departmental requirements” and does not count toward the total number of hours.

Theories Seminar:

All Religion MA students are required to take the following course and should register for it in their first semester:

RELI 8770 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion, 3 hrs.

Note: RELI 8770 may count toward the 24 hours of coursework and toward the 12 hours at 8000-level outlined below.

Graduate Electives (min. 24 hrs.):

Religion MA students take at least 24 hours (typically 8 courses) of graduate-level electives. Of these, at least 12 hours (typically 4 courses) must be at 8000-level or in graduate-only courses, and 12 hours (typically 4 courses) can be at 6000-level or higher.

The 24 hours of coursework include at least 18 hours in a major area and at least 6 hours in a minor area.

A major area is selected from one of the following areas of concentration:

- Jewish Studies (Hebrew Bible & Jewish Literature, History, Thought, Culture)
- Christian Studies (Bible & Christian Literature, History, Thought, Culture)
- Islamic Studies (Quran & Islamic Literature, History, Thought, Culture)
- Asian Religions (Literature, History, Thought, Culture in Hinduism or Buddhism)
- American Religion (Anthropology and American Religion, Southern Religion)

A minor area is selected in consultation with the major professor from the areas of concentration listed above or from other pertinent areas such as:

- Anthropology
- Art
- Classics
- History
- Linguistics
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Psychology

- Sociology

(This list is a suggestion; other minors are available with the approval of your major professor.)

Individualized Requirements:

Major professors and students may consider the option of adding coursework to gain more advanced proficiency in particular research topics, methods, languages, or similar. This depends on the student's individualized research area and approach.

Research Skills Requirement:

Our department's default policy is reading knowledge of one non-English language to be decided upon by the student in consultation with the major professor. This requirement may be satisfied in a number of ways:

- Earning a B or higher in the third semester of an undergraduate language course sequence.
- Earning a B or higher in a one-semester language course for graduate students, e.g. FREN 2500, GRMN 3500, or SPAN 2500.
- Passing a Research Skills Foreign Language Exam given once a semester by Romance Languages or another department.
- Passing a language exam given by a faculty member with the permission of the major professor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Note: On the MA program of study, fulfilment of the research skills requirement is noted separately under "Research skills requirement." If the research skills requirement is fulfilled by taking undergraduate-level classes (below 6000-level), these classes do not count toward the total hours on the program of study.

Research and Writing Hours for the Master's Thesis:

In consultation with their major professor and other relevant faculty, MA students will research, write, and defend an in-depth scholarly Master's thesis on a research topic that is of particular interest to them.

RELI 7000, Master's Research, min. 3 hrs. on the MA program of study

RELI 7300, Master's Thesis, min. 3 hrs. on the MA program of study

Total hours:

An MA program of study must include a minimum of 30 graduate hours, *in addition to* the classes that are listed separately: the GradFIRST seminar (GRSC 7001) and the teaching seminar (RELI 7770, GRSC 7770, or equivalent). Any undergraduate classes taken (below 6000-level) are not included on the MA program of study. At least 12 hours on the program of study must be at 8000-level or in graduate-only courses (exclusive of 7000, 7005, and 7300).

Note: With the exception of the classes listed separately, all graduate courses should be listed on the program of study in the order taken. No grade below "C" will be accepted on the program of study. To be eligible to graduate, a student must maintain a 3.0 ("B") average on all courses in the program of study *and* on all graduate courses taken.

Sample Program of Study

Below is one possible sample program of study for an MA student in Religion.

Note: For each semester, add any individualized requirement, research skills requirement, and/or RELI 7000, 7005, 7300 to reach the enrollment hours needed for the semester.

Course Number	Course Title	Hours	
<u>1st year, Fall</u>			
GRSC 7001	GradFIRST Seminar	[1]	<i>GradFIRST [listed separately]</i>
RELI 7770	Teaching Seminar	[1-3]	<i>Teaching [listed separately]</i>
RELI 8770	Theories Seminar	3	<i>Theories (8000-level)</i>
RELI (AFAM) 6201	African American Religious History	3	<i>Elective (6000+)</i>
<u>1st year, Spring</u>			
RELI (AFAM) 6202	Southern Religious History	3	<i>Elective (6000+)</i>
RELI (WMST) 6550	Women in World Religions	3	<i>Elective (6000+)</i>
HIST (RELI) 6214	Intro to the Religions of the Caribbean	3	<i>Elective (6000+)</i>
HIST (AFAM) 8005	Colloquium in African American History	3	<i>Elective (8000-level)</i>
<u>2nd year, Fall</u>			
RELI 7000	Master’s Research	3	<i>Thesis</i>
RELI 8700	Problems and Topics (Writing Seminar)	3	<i>Elective (8000-level)</i>
<u>2nd year, Spring</u>			
RELI 7300	Master’s Thesis	3	<i>Thesis</i>
RELI 8200	Religion in the Americas	3	<i>Elective (8000-level)</i>

ENROLLMENT HOURS PER SEMESTER

The Schedule of Classes for each semester is posted on the Registrar's website:

<https://www.reg.uga.edu/schedule-of-classes>

Registration for the Fall semester begins in April, and registration for the Spring semester begins in November. Prior to registration you should contact your major professor to work out a plan of coursework and hours for the coming semester. Your plan must be approved by your major professor and the Director of Graduate Studies before you can be cleared to register for classes. Once you have been cleared, you can login to Athena to register: <https://athena.uga.edu>

Students on an assistantship must at the latest be registered by the end of the drop/add period (the first few days of each semester).

Graduate students on an assistantship that awards a tuition waiver must register for a minimum of 12 graduate hours and a maximum of 18 semester hours each Fall and Spring semester (and, if applicable, at least 9 hours in the Summer semester). The department will ask you to register for 18 hours. Graduate students who are University System of Georgia employees on the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) may register for a maximum of 9 semester hours. All other graduate students can register for 3-18 hours without requesting overload permission.

RELI 7005 is a 3 hour course that can fill hours for graduate students who need hours to meet their requirements. RELI 7005 is not included on the program of study. RELI 7000 and 7300 are thesis research and writing hours. Students will usually register for these hours under their major professor. When applicable, students can register for 1-12 hours of RELI 7000 and/or 1-12 hours of RELI 7300 per

semester.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM (“COMPS”) AND PROSPECTUS

The written comprehensive exam (“comps”) for MA students:

A written exam covering the major area of concentration must be taken and passed to qualify for submitting a thesis. This exam will last no more than six total hours. The timing of the exam and the distribution of its hours are at the discretion of the major professor, in consultation with the student. The exam is graded by the major professor and one other faculty member. Under normal circumstances, the grading (pass/fail) of this exam will be completed within two weeks after it has been taken. The student will then be notified of the outcome by the major professor.

Prospectus:

The student must submit to the major professor an acceptable, written thesis proposal, which the Graduate School terms a thesis prospectus. The student shall write a complete, detailed proposal of the thesis which clearly outlines the topic, the significance of the research, the methodology to be employed, and the proposed sections of the thesis. The proposal should include a bibliography. The prospectus will normally be submitted to your major professor by the beginning of your second year. The prospectus will be read by the advisory committee. When approved, the committee members sign an appropriate form, which, together with the approved prospectus, is filed with the Director of Graduate Studies.

RESEARCHING AND WRITING THE THESIS

The thesis research is developed under the direction of the major professor, but other members of the advisory committee can be consulted when relevant. As the student completes drafts of each section of the thesis, the drafts should be sent to the major professor and relevant committee members for feedback. The student can then revise each section based on the feedback.

Use of AI:

Note that the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in theses and dissertations is considered unauthorized assistance per UGA’s Academic Code of Honesty and is prohibited unless specifically authorized by members of the student’s advisory committee in writing.

FINAL SEMESTER

The final semester brings a series of deadlines set by the Graduate School, which can be viewed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/important-dates-deadlines>. It is the student’s responsibility to meet each deadline; please do not rely on anyone to remind you. If you have applied for graduation and later find you will not be able to meet one of the deadlines, you must notify the Graduate School prior to the deadline by contacting gradinfo@uga.edu or your file may be placed on inactive status.

You must be registered for a minimum of 3 graduate hours in your final semester.

Application for graduation:

At the very start of your final semester, you must submit an application for graduation. The form for the application for graduation can be accessed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

THESIS DEFENSE, FORMAT CHECK, AND FINAL APPROVAL

Thesis defense:

After consulting with the major professor, the student will send a complete copy of the thesis to the major professor and committee. Note that even if the thesis in development has been given to the readers on a chapter by chapter basis, a complete copy of the thesis for defense must still be sent to the committee.

The complete copy should be sent to the entire committee at least one month prior to the oral defense.

The committee must give assent to move forward with the oral thesis defense. If they assent, the student and major professor can schedule a date for the thesis defense. The date for the defense must be at least two weeks prior to the Graduate School's thesis submission deadline. Prior to the defense, the student must submit the Approval Form for Master's Thesis and Final Oral Examination, which can be accessed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

Thesis format check:

The Graduate School requires that your thesis follow a certain format and style guide. The Graduate School Style Guide can be obtained at the Graduate School website: <https://grad.uga.edu/development/academic/theses-dissertation-overview>

You must submit a complete copy of your formatted thesis for a format check on ProQuest before the deadline set by the Graduate School. This can be done prior to the defense. Submit by clicking on the link that says "ETD [electronic thesis/dissertation] Format Check Submission" at: <https://grad.uga.edu/development/academic/theses-dissertation-overview>. They will alert you of any formatting errors that you will need to fix prior to turning in the final copy.

Thesis approval:

Following the thesis defense, you will complete all corrections to your thesis as required by your major professor and committee. The corrections you make must then be approved by your major professor and committee.

Once the corrections have been approved, you may submit the Electronic Thesis/Dissertation (ETD) Submission Approval Form, which can be accessed at: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

You can then submit your final approved thesis to ProQuest.

MA TIME LIMIT

MA students must complete all requirements for the degree within six years, beginning with the first registration for graduate courses on the program of study.

4. APPEALS, GRIEVANCES, EXCEPTIONS, LEAVES, TERMINATIONS, PROBATIONS, AND DISMISSALS

APPEALS

Appeals resulting from academic decisions (for example related to grades, admission, coursework, comprehensive exams, thesis/dissertation defenses, degree completion, extension, probation, or dismissal decisions) are usually first directed to the department responsible for the decision within 30 days of notification of the decision.

In the Department of Religion, students may submit a grade appeal to the course instructor and, if the issue is not resolved, to the Department Head. The student and/or Department Head may consult with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).

Students may appeal all other academic decisions in writing to the DGS within 30 days of receiving notification of the decision. The DGS must present the appeal to the department's graduate faculty for consideration and a vote in a timely manner, usually at the next faculty meeting. The DGS must notify the student of the outcome in a timely manner.

An unfavorable ruling at the department level may be appealed to successive levels within the university, including to the Graduate School. An applicant/student who submits an appeal to the Graduate School may have the petition considered by the Appeals Committee of the Graduate Council. The Appeals Committee will consider appeals of administrative decisions by the dean of the Graduate School or appellate bodies at the department/school/college level involving academic matters. An applicant/student who wishes to appeal a decision must initiate the process within 30 calendar days after receipt of an adverse decision by the dean of the Graduate School or by an appellate body at the department/school/college level.

An unfavorable ruling at the Graduate School level may be appealed to successive levels and ultimately to the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

The Graduate School's full policy on appeals can be found at:

<https://policy.uga.edu/policies#/programs/SkqcrwuO6> Further information on the appeal process can also be found on the Graduate School website or by contacting gradassociatedean@uga.edu.

GRIEVANCES

If students experience undue difficulties or concerns as a direct result of their program, including faculty within the program, they may seek to resolve these difficulties by submitting a grievance. Students are encouraged to consider whether they could first raise their concern informally with their major professor, their committee, another faculty member, or the DGS, before taking the step of submitting a formal grievance.

In the Department of Religion, a student wishing to formally voice a grievance may submit a grievance complaint in writing (clearly including the term "grievance") to the DGS. The DGS must respond to the student in writing in a timely manner and may take steps such as arranging individual or collective meetings with others involved. (If the grievance concerns the DGS, the student may go directly to the Department Head.) If the student does not feel the grievance has been adequately resolved, the student may then address their grievance in writing to the Department Head (clearly including the term

“grievance”), who must respond to the student in writing in a timely manner.

If the student does not feel the grievance has been adequately resolved at the department level, the student may then address their grievance in writing to the responsible Associate Dean in the Franklin College Dean’s Office. If the student feels the Dean’s Office does not adequately resolve the grievance, the student may then address their grievance to the responsible Associate Dean in the Graduate School at gradassociatedean@uga.edu.

EXCEPTIONS

A student who wishes to petition for an exception to program or Graduate School policies may do so in writing. Program policies include but are not limited to program of study, research skills, comprehensive exam format, prospectus, and thesis/dissertation format requirements. Graduate School policies include but are not limited to GradFIRST, total hours, residency, enrollment, comprehensive exam defense, candidacy, thesis/dissertation defense, and time limit requirements.

In the Religion Department, a student may submit a petition for an exception in writing to the DGS, and the student’s major professor must also state their approval or disapproval of the petition in writing to the DGS. If the student has formed a committee, the DGS will notify the committee before a decision is made. The DGS must then consult in a timely manner with the Department Head. Approval will only be granted if the major professor, the DGS, and the Department Head all agree. The DGS must notify the student of the outcome in writing in a timely manner once a decision has been made, at most within two business days.

At the Graduate School level, students may petition for an exception to Graduate School policies by writing a letter to the Dean of the Graduate School stating the nature of the request and providing the reason to justify approval of the request. The major professor must review the student’s request and write a letter to the Dean stating approval or disapproval of the petition. The DGS and Department Head must review the major professor’s recommendation and indicate their concurrence by writing an additional letter of recommendation, which they should co-sign. If they do not concur with the recommendation, further information should be provided by them in the letter to the Dean.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence provides a mechanism for students experiencing unusual circumstances to be exempt temporarily from the graduate continuous enrollment policy. A leave of absence requires approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Graduate School. A leave of absence will be granted only for good cause, such as: serious medical and health-related issues; major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery therefrom, adoption or fostering of a child, childcare, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study.

An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of 3 credit hours for each semester for which the leave of absence is granted. During a leave of absence, students may not use UGA facilities, resources, or services designed or intended only for enrolled students; receive a graduate assistantship, fellowship, or financial aid from UGA; or take any UGA courses related to their program of study. The amount of time approved for leave of absence will not count toward time limits governing a graduate degree.

A student may apply for a leave of absence before or during any semester in which they are not registered for courses. The form to request a leave of absence can be accessed at <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>. The form must be received by the Graduate School on or before the last day of classes for the semester for which it is requested. A leave of absence will not be granted retroactively after the end of a semester. A student may submit multiple requests for a leave of absence subject to a 3 semester limit.

The Graduate School's full policy on leaves of absence can be found at:
https://policy.uga.edu/policies#/programs/BydQdw_u6

TERMINATING A MAJOR PROFESSOR RELATIONSHIP

In the Department of Religion, a student may choose to end the formal relationship with their major professor at any point. The student must first meet with the DGS, before notifying the DGS in writing that they will no longer work with their current major professor and that they will instead seek a new major professor. The student does not have to notify the current major professor; instead, the DGS will take responsibility for notifying the current major professor of the change. It is the student's responsibility to find a new major professor among the graduate faculty members in the Religion Department, and the student must notify the DGS when they have found a new major professor. The DGS will work closely with the student in this situation. Note that if the student is unable to identify a major professor, then the student will be placed on the status "No clear path to degree" (see the section on "Probation and Dismissal").

In the Department of Religion, a faculty member may choose to end the formal relationship as the major professor of a student at any point. However, the faculty member is strongly urged to first try all other avenues toward making the professional relationship work and to weigh the decision very carefully. In recognition of the potentially serious nature of this step, the faculty member must meet with the DGS and Department Head to fully explain their decision, and they must all agree on a specific and reasonable timeline for the step, perhaps extending over several semesters and giving high priority to the student's academic progress and welfare. Following the meeting, the DGS must notify the student in writing, must offer to meet with the student to discuss the situation, and must communicate the intention to work closely with the student to examine available options. The DGS must also clearly state in writing that once the change has taken place, the student will need to identify a new major professor among the graduate faculty in the Religion Department or else may be placed on the status "No clear path to degree" (see "Probation and Dismissal").

TERMINATING AN ASSISTANTSHIP

The performance of all Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants in each academic unit should be evaluated annually following written policies and procedures adopted by the unit.

In the Department of Religion, the DGS is responsible for ensuring all first-year Teaching Assistants receive training and an evaluation of their teaching. For example, the DGS may ask the instructor of the department's Teaching Seminar if they are willing to carry out this task in the Fall semester. The DGS is also responsible for organizing approval of the renewal of Teaching Assistantships for all TAs in subsequent years. For example, this may be done through review of student feedback on the TA's teaching, opportunity for faculty feedback, and a faculty vote on the Teaching Assistantship renewals

(typically each Fall semester). The DGS will notify the relevant graduate students in writing that they have been approved to have their Teaching Assistantship renewed for the following year.

Ongoing informal evaluations should occur in addition to the annual evaluation. If these informal evaluations identify a weakness, the GA or GTA should be advised in writing of the weakness by the DGS, and a notation of the evaluation should be entered in their personnel records (kept by the DGS). A plan of improvement should be devised by the GA or GTA and their immediate supervisor(s). If the performance of a GA or GTA fails to improve in accordance with the plan, further action should be taken. In situations where continuance of the assistantship would be detrimental to the effective operation of the academic unit, the Department Head in consultation with the DGS will consider termination of the assistantship with the assistance of UGA's Human Resources Department.

When an assistantship is terminated, the student must be advised in writing of the termination and of the appeal procedures. Appeals of terminations, unless they include charges of Title IX or NDAH violations, will be heard through the channels established for academic decisions (see the section on "Appeals").

PROBATION AND DISMISSAL

Students may be placed on probation and dismissed from their program either at the Graduate School level or at the department level.

At the Graduate School level, students with a cumulative graduate course GPA below 3.0 for two consecutive terms are placed on academic probation by the Graduate School. They then must make a 3.0 or higher GPA (in graduate courses) every succeeding semester until the cumulative graduate GPA is 3.0 or above. If they make below a 3.0 semester graduate GPA while on probation, they are dismissed.

In the Department of Religion, graduate students may be placed on probation or dismissed from the academic program at the end of any semester for any of the following reasons:

- A Title IX or Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment (NDAH) violation.
- Research misconduct or violation of ethical standards for research in our discipline.
- Failure to adhere to the UGA Honor Code.
- Student misconduct of a nature judged sufficiently serious to warrant probation or dismissal on grounds of unprofessional behavior that is detrimental to the effective operation of the academic unit.
- Inadequate academic progress. In the Department of Religion, "inadequate academic progress" is defined as failure to meet a specific and reasonable academic milestone, by a specific and reasonable deadline, which the DGS has communicated clearly to the student in writing prior to the first day of the semester together with a clear statement that if this milestone is not met, then the student will be placed on probation at the end of the semester. The major professor, the DGS, and the Department Head must all agree on both the specific milestone and the specific deadline, and the major professor and Department Head must both be copied on the DGS' written statement to the student. If the student fails to meet the specified milestone by the deadline, then the DGS will inform the student in writing at the end of the semester that the student has been placed on probation. The DGS must at the same time clearly state in writing what the student is required to do during the following semester to be taken off probation, including a specific and reasonable deadline for the requirement. Again, the major professor, the DGS, and the Department Head must all agree on both the specific requirement and the specific deadline, and the major professor and Department Head must both be copied on the DGS' written statement to the student. The DGS must also state clearly in

the written statement that if the student meets the requirement by the deadline, then the student will be taken off probation, whereas if the student fails to meet the requirement by the deadline, then the student will be dismissed from the program at the end of the following semester.

- No clear path to degree. In the Department of Religion, if a graduate student is unable to identify a major professor or is unable to form an advisory committee, the DGS has the option of placing the student on a status called “No clear path to degree completion.” The DGS must consult with the Department Head before taking this step and must notify the student in writing (copying the Department Head). The student must be given one full semester after being placed on this status to identify a major professor or form a committee. The DGS will seek to work closely with the student during this time to try to rectify the problem. If the situation is not resolved during this semester, the student can be dismissed from the program at the end of the semester.

Graduate students who are placed on probation or on the status “no clear path to degree” may *not* have their assistantship removed for this reason. The assistantship should only be removed under circumstances when it would ordinarily have been removed anyway.

The Graduate School’s full policy on probation and dismissal can be found at:
<https://policy.uga.edu/policies#/programs/SJodDPOua>

Probation and dismissal decisions may be appealed (see the section on “Appeals”).

5. RESOURCES

The best guide to graduate student resources is the “Resources Digest” the Graduate School sends via email to all graduate students every month. The Graduate School offers comprehensive resources for graduate students at UGA in the areas of academic skills development, professional and career path preparation, personal well-being, and funding opportunities. The digest includes links to these resources as well as resources across campus, timely information about upcoming workshops, and any application deadlines. In addition, the Graduate School provides an overview on its website:

<https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/>

Here are quick links to the Graduate School’s pages for forms and deadlines:

Forms: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/forms>

Deadlines: <https://grad.uga.edu/current-students/important-dates-deadlines>

You may also wish to consult these and other units for specific types of support:

Bursar’s Office “Quick Links” (help with student accounts; tuition and fees; payments; cost calculator):

https://busfin.uga.edu/bursar/bursar_quick_links/

EITS / Information Technology (help with UGA MyID; UGAMail):

<https://eits.uga.edu> (click on “Help Desk” in the upper right corner)

Office of Global Engagement (help with visas; passports):

<https://globalengagement.uga.edu/>

Schedule of classes for each semester:

<https://www.reg.uga.edu/schedule-of-classes>

Athena (registering for classes):

<https://athena.uga.edu>

Center for Teaching and Learning - Graduate Student Services:

<https://wwwctl.uga.edu/grad-student/>

Office of Instruction - Student Resources:

<https://instruction.uga.edu/resources/student/>

Help with eLC:

<https://help.elc.uga.edu/>

UGA Libraries - Services for Graduate Students:

<https://www.libs.uga.edu/graduates>

Writing Center:

<https://www.english.uga.edu/jill-and-marvin-willis-center-writing>

Career Center - Services for Graduate Students:

https://career.uga.edu/graduate_students

Mentor Program:

<https://mentor.uga.edu/>

Professional photo booth:

https://career.uga.edu/professional_photo_booth

Internship consultations with Dr Christine Lasek-White:

<https://www.franklin.uga.edu/career-resources-humanities-majors>

Health Center:

<https://healthcenter.uga.edu/>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP):

<https://healthpromotion.uga.edu/rsvp/>

Love and Money Center:

<https://www.fcs.uga.edu/loveandmoneycenter>

Well-Being Resources:

<https://well-being.uga.edu/>

APPENDIX A

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The University of Georgia (the “University”) is committed to maintaining a fair and respectful environment for living, work, and study. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, University System of Georgia (“USG”) policy, and University policy, the University prohibits harassment of or discrimination against any person because of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status by any member of the University Community (as defined below) on campus, in connection with a University program or activity, or in a manner that creates a hostile environment for any member of the University Community. Incidents of harassment and discrimination will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or expulsion from the University.

Please read and familiarize yourself with this policy, which can be found on the Equal Opportunity Office (EOO) website: https://eoo.uga.edu/civil_rights_NDAH/ndah-policy/

APPENDIX B

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

UGA seeks to promote and ensure academic honesty and personal integrity among students and the university community. Academic honesty is vital to the very fabric and integrity of the university. Academic honesty is defined as completing all academic work without cheating, lying, stealing, or receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information not appropriately authorized or attributed. All syllabi must include the statement:

“UGA Student Honor Code: ‘I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.’ A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at honesty.uga.edu.”

An instructor has the responsibility to report possible violations of the Academic Honesty policy. When an instructor believes an incident of academic dishonesty has occurred, the instructor should report the allegation to the Office of Academic Honesty by going to their website (<https://honesty.uga.edu/resources/faculty/>) and clicking on “Report Violation.” The office will notify the accused student. Instructors should not discuss the report with the student(s) until a facilitator is available. A meeting will be scheduled with a facilitator to provide an educational, fair, and focused discussion of what may have occurred. The only parties present are the instructor(s), student(s), and facilitator.

Please read and familiarize yourself with this policy, including “Tips to Avoid Academic Dishonesty” in your classes, which can be found on the Office of Academic Honesty website: <https://honesty.uga.edu/resources/faculty/>

APPENDIX C

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and University policy provide important safeguards for maintaining the confidentiality of student records.

As a TA, you are responsible for protecting the confidentiality of students' records. For example, you should not discuss a student's academic work with persons other than faculty or TAs who are part of the teaching team for that class. Do not display students' grades in a public manner and do not leave them in plain view in an open mailbox. Graded papers or tests should not be left unattended in a public area, nor should students sort through graded papers or tests to retrieve their own. The list of students enrolled in the class should be handled in a confidential manner and not disclosed to third parties. Parents and significant others do not have a right to information contained in a student's education record, nor do employers have this right. Specifically, do not provide anyone with a student's class schedule. If someone indicates it is necessary to contact a student due to an emergency, refer them to Student Care and Outreach for assistance at 706-542-7774. Recordings of class sessions that show one or more students may be made available to students enrolled in the class during that semester, but these recordings should not be made available to anyone outside the class nor to any classes in subsequent semesters.

Please read and familiarize yourself with this policy, which can be found on the Registrar's website: <https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa/>