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GRADUATE HANDBOOK

2011-2012



**Graduate Handbook
2011-2012
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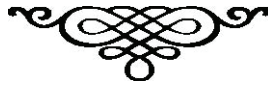
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This Handbook is designed to supplement the information given in the *Graduate School Calendar*. The student should be acquainted with the information provided in the *Calendar* and not rely entirely on the material presented here. Students are responsible for being familiar with the guidelines of the University and the Department.

GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

1. INTRODUCTION

McMASTER UNIVERSITY

McMaster University is situated in Hamilton, Ontario at the western tip of Lake Ontario, sixty kilometres southwest of Toronto, and sixty kilometres northwest of Niagara Falls.

Incorporated in 1887 under the terms of an Act of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, the University was the outgrowth of two colleges which had undertaken educational work in Ontario since the 1830s. In 1957 the Act underwent major revisions and McMaster University is now one of fourteen private, but provincially funded, universities in the Province of Ontario.

The University has approximately 21,173 full-time undergraduate students (and another 3,800 part-time) and 3,025 full- and part-time graduate students. The University has emphasized research in medicine, science and some areas of the arts and has exceptional laboratory facilities and a research library including, among other collections, the papers of Bertrand Russell.

THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES GRADUATE PROGRAMME

Since 1964, the Department of Religious Studies at McMaster has offered graduate programmes dealing with religion and human religious experience, past and present, East and West. The department has no confessional ties; it seeks, rather, to cultivate a positive appreciation of the world's religious traditions in a spirit of free, open enquiry, critical reflection, and solidly-grounded judgment. The department draws on a wide variety of methodological resources, especially philosophical, philological, literary, historical, and social scientific, in the effort to understand religion and religious phenomena.

The department is a member of the Council on Graduate Studies in Religion and upholds the standards enunciated by that organization. Students who earn graduate degrees at McMaster must demonstrate "excellence in the scholarly study of religion and the capacity for significant independent research, writing, and teaching in recognized areas of specialization within religious studies." There are currently about 50 graduate students enrolled in the department, and 14 professors active in graduate supervision.

FIELDS OF STUDY

FIELDS:	AREAS:
Asian Field:	Buddhism East Asian Religions
Biblical Field:	Early Judaism Early Christianity
Western Field:	Religion and Politics Religion and the Social Sciences Western Religious Thought

In order that all graduate students have the opportunity to develop both depth and breadth in their courses of study, candidates for M.A. and Ph.D. degrees are normally required to choose one major area of study and one minor area of study from the above list of seven areas.

The following descriptions should give students some understanding of the type of work sponsored in each of the departmental areas.

1. **ASIAN FIELD**

Buddhism

Research is sponsored in this area primarily in Buddhist canonical literature in Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan and Chinese; Modern and Contemporary Buddhism in Japan; Medieval Chinese Buddhism; Buddhist thought; doctrine and practice in East Asian Buddhism. Course work and comprehensive examinations include (in addition to the listed areas of research) Indian monasticism, Buddhist apocrypha, and Buddhist understandings of death and dying. Students taking comprehensive examinations in this area should also have a broad knowledge of the history of Buddhist Studies in Europe, North America and Asia. A variety of approaches and methodologies are encouraged (textual, literary, social historical, art historical, sociological, anthropological).

The Faculty members working in the area are Drs. Benn, Clarke, and Rowe.

East Asian Religions

Research is sponsored in this area in a wide range of topics, including Taoist canonical literature; the construction of Shinto; Chinese science, alchemy and medicine; the New Religions of Japan; and the relationship of Buddhism with indigenous East Asian traditions (Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto); religion and modernity in East Asia; popular religion in East Asia as seen in literary works, etc. Course work and comprehensive examinations include many of these same topics. In addition, students taking major comprehensive examinations should have a good general knowledge of East Asian history and culture, including knowledge of secular literature. A variety of approaches and methodologies is encouraged (textual, literary, social historical, art historical, sociological, anthropological).

The Faculty members working in the area are Drs. Benn, Clarke, and Rowe.

2. **BIBLICAL FIELD**

Early Judaism

Research is sponsored in this area primarily in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the writings of the “Apocrypha” and “Pseudepigrapha,” Philo and Hellenistic Judaism. Course work and comprehensive examinations include (in addition to the listed areas of research) Hebrew Bible, the history of Second Temple Judaism, and Early Rabbinic Judaism. A variety of approaches and methodologies for the study of Early Judaism are introduced (textual, literary, social historical, feminist, philosophical/ theological, etc.).

Faculty members working in this area are Drs. Machiela, Runesson, and Schuller. Adjunct faculty are Drs. Reed and Reinhartz.

Early Christianity

Research is sponsored in this area primarily in the writings included in the New Testament, particularly the Synoptic gospels and the Johannine and Pauline literature, and in the early Greek Church Fathers. Course work and comprehensive examinations include the history of Christian beginnings (from Jesus to Constantine), the Jewish and Greco-Roman environment, and a diversity of approaches and methodologies currently used in the study of Early Christianity.

Faculty members working in this area are Drs. Runesson, Westerholm, and Widdicombe. Adjunct faculty are Drs. Reed and Reinhartz.

3. WESTERN FIELD

Religion and Politics

This area studies accounts of the interrelations between religion, ethics, and politics from ancient Greece to the modern West. Areas of concentration include the following: (1) the history of political philosophy; (2) analysis of literary expressions of an understanding of religion, ethics, and politics; (3) study of critical social and ethical theories with reference to the underlying theological and philosophical anthropologies. Students are expected to develop competence in the ancient Greek, medieval, early modern, and modern periods through suitable course work and, in the case of doctoral students, preparation for comprehensive examinations.

Faculty members in the area are Drs. Hollander, Kroeker, and Planinc.

Religion and the Social Sciences

Research in Religion and the Social Sciences is primarily concerned with the anthropology and sociology of religion. Students are expected to acquire a thorough knowledge of the historical development of these fields, as well as of contemporary theoretical approaches. Students majoring in the area have worked in three primary fields: North American religion, including fundamentalism, Evangelicalism, and new or occult religious movements; native religion and its interface with Christianity in African and North American contexts; and religion in twentieth century social thought, including Bertrand Russell studies. Area faculty have also contributed significantly to dissertations with social scientific emphases in other areas of the department.

Faculty working in the area are Drs. Badone, Rowe, Rothenberg, and Takim; faculty from other departments in the Social Sciences are drawn upon for supervisory purposes as well as course work.

Western Religious Thought

This area covers philosophy of religion, theology, and ethics in the classical and modern periods. Areas of specialization include patristic thought, the interrelations between philosophy and religion, hermeneutical theory, secular challenges to religious thought, modern theology and ethics, both Christian and Jewish. Course work and comprehensive examinations include both historical-systematic studies of perennial theological and philosophical themes and specialized contemporary topics.

Faculty working in the area are Drs. Hollander, Kroeker, Takim and Widdicombe.

FULL-TIME FACULTY PROFILES

(The publications that follow are only a recent sample of faculty members' work.)

Badone, Ellen. Professor
(Ph.D., Berkeley, 1985)

Email: badone@mcmaster.ca

Western Europe is my primary geographical area of research. My initial fieldwork, in 1983-84, in Brittany, France, dealt with the social and cultural context of death. In particular, I focused on changes in Breton responses to death which have accompanied social change in this region since 1945. My research on death led to an interest in gerontology and medical anthropology and I have worked on the relationships between alternative healing and the biomedical system in Brittany. In addition, I have edited a volume of papers on the tensions between Catholic orthodoxy and popular definitions of religion in Europe. My current research concerns the anthropology of pilgrimage, and the relationships between pilgrimage and tourism. I have researched pilgrimage at a Marian apparition shrine in Brittany and at Les Saintes Maries de la Mer in southern France, a shrine which is particularly important for Roman pilgrims. From 2005-2007, I was president of the Society for the Anthropology of Religion, a sub-section of the American Anthropological Association.

2008 "Pilgrimage, Tourism and the Da Vinci Code at Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, France." *Culture and Religion* 9 (1): 23–44.

2008 "Illness, Biomedicine and Alternative Healing in Brittany, France." *Medical Anthropology: Cross-Cultural Studies in Health and Illness* 27 (2): 190–218.

2007 "Echoes from Kerizinen: Pilgrimage, Narrative and the Construction of Sacred History at a Marian Shrine in Northwestern France." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13: 453–470.

2004 *Intersecting Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage and Tourism*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press (edited with Sharon R. Roseman).

Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in European Society (Editor). Princeton University Press, 1990.

The Appointed Hour: Death, Worldview and Social Change in Brittany. The University of California Press, 1989.



**Benn, James. Associate Professor
(Ph.D. UCLA, 2001)**

Email: bennjam@mcmaster.ca

I was trained primarily as a scholar of medieval Chinese religions (Buddhism and Taoism). My research is aimed at understanding the practices and world views of medieval men and women, both religious and lay, through the close reading of primary sources in literary Chinese—the lingua franca of East Asian religions. I have concentrated on three major areas of research: bodily practice in Chinese Religions; the ways in which people create and transmit new religious practices and doctrines; and the religious dimensions of commodity culture. In particular I have worked on self-immolation, Chinese Buddhist apocrypha, and the religious and cultural history of tea.

Buddhist Monasticism in East Asia: Places of Practice, edited by James A. Benn, Lori Meeks, James Robson. Routledge, 2009.

“Another Look at the Pseudo-*Śūraṅgama Sutra*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 68, no. 1 (June 2008), 57–87.

Burning for the Buddha: Self-immolation in Chinese Buddhism. Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism, 19. University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007.

“Spontaneous Human Combustion: Some Remarks on a Phenomenon in Chinese Buddhism,” in *Heroes and Saints: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on the Moment of Death*, edited by Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara, 101–133. Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007.

“Fire and the Sword: Some Connections between Self-immolation and Religious Persecution in the History of Chinese Buddhism” in *The Buddhist Dead: Practices, Discourses and Representations*, edited by Bryan Cuevas and Jacqueline Stone, 234–65. Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism 20. University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007.

“Written in Flames: Self-immolation in Sixth-century Sichuan,” *T’oung Pao* 92, no. 4–5 (2006), 410–465.

“Buddhism, Alcohol, and Tea in Medieval China” in *Of Tripod and Palate: Food and Religion in Traditional China*, edited by Roel Sterckx, 213–36. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.



Clarke, Shayne. Associate Professor
(Ph.D. UCLA, 2006)

Email: clarsha@mcmaster.ca

My research interests focus on Indian Buddhist monasticism, with particular reference to Buddhist monastic law codes *vinaya* preserved in Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, and Chinese. I am primarily concerned with trying to understand what it meant to be a Buddhist monk/nun in India. To that end, my forthcoming monograph, *Family Matters in Indian Buddhist Monasticism* uses epigraphical and literary sources (Sanskrit drama, etc.) in addition to canonical Buddhist law codes to reconsider the role of the family in monastic Buddhism: relationships between monks and nuns, their families, children, marriages, and celibacy.

I also have ongoing research interests in Buddhist *sutra* literature in general, both Mainstream and Mahayana, and particularly in the differences between the visions of the religious life portrayed in *sutra* and monastic law *vinaya*. I am also interested in the study of material culture in the archaeological, art-historical, epigraphical, and textual records, and the role of humour and narrative in religious and legal texts. Other interests include the study of the translation and transmission of Buddhist texts from India to China, Tibet, etc., the development of Buddhist sectarianism, and the reception of Buddhism in China and Japan, particularly as reflected in Japanese literature of the Tokugawa, Meiji, and Taishō periods.

“When and Where is a Monk No Longer a Monk? On Communion and Communities in Indian Buddhist Monastic Law Codes.” *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 52/2–3 (2009), 115–141.

“Locating Humour in Indian Buddhist Monastic Law Codes: A Comparative Approach.” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 37/4 (2009), 311–330.

“Monks Who Have Sex: Pārājika Penance in Indian Buddhist Monasticisms.” *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 37/1 (2009), 1–43.

“The Case of the nun Mettiya reexamined: on the expulsion of a pregnant bhikṣuṇī in the Vinaya of the Mahāsaṅghikas and other Indian Buddhist monastic law codes.” *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 51/2 (2008), 115–135.

“Miscellaneous Musings on Mūlasarvāstivāda Monks: The *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* Revival in Tokugawa Japan.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 33/1 (2006), 1–49.

“*Vinaya Matrka*—Mother of the Monastic Codes, or Just Another Set of Lists? A Response to Frauwallner’s Handling of the Mahāsaṅghika *Vinaya*.” *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 47/2 (2004), 77–120.

“Right Section, Wrong Collection: An Identification of a Canonical Vinaya Text in the Tibetan *bstan ’gyur—bya ba’i phung po zhes bya ba (Kriyaskandha-nama)*.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 124/2 (2004), 335–340.



**Hollander, Dana. Associate Professor
(Ph.D., Johns Hopkins, 2001**

Email: danahol@mcmaster.ca
<http://univmail.mcmaster.ca/~danahol/>

**Member, MA Program in Cultural Studies & Critical Theory
Associate Member, Department of Philosophy**

My primary research areas are Modern Jewish Thought, 20th-century French and German Philosophy (especially the phenomenological tradition), and German-Jewish History and Culture. My book *Exemplarity and Chosenness* is a combined study of Jacques Derrida's philosophy from his earliest writings on Husserl to his considerations of "philosophical nationality" during the 1980s to his later writings on ethico-politico-religious themes, and of Franz Rosenzweig's philosophy of Judaism, especially his theory of election and messianism. My current SSHRC-sponsored research project is on ethics, law and the theme of "the neighbor" in the works of the German-Jewish philosopher Hermann Cohen. My graduate courses are designed to introduce students to core figures in continental philosophy and religious thought, and in modern Jewish thought, including Mendelssohn, Husserl, Heidegger, Cohen, Rosenzweig, Levinas, and Derrida, and their receptions. (See past syllabi on my home page.) Partly thanks to my appointment as a Canada Research Chair in Modern Jewish Thought during 2003–08, I have been working to enhance the profile of this area of study and research, as well as foster work in modern Judaism more broadly, at McMaster.

Exemplarity and Chosenness. Rosenzweig and Derrida on the Nation of Philosophy. Stanford University Press, 2008.

"Ethical-Political Universality Out of the Sources of Judaism: Reading Hermann Cohen's 1888 Affidavit In and Out of Context," *New Themes in Jewish Philosophy*, ed. Aaron Hughes and Elliot Wolfson (Indiana University Press, 2009).

"Is the Other My Neighbor? Reading Levinas Alongside Hermann Cohen," in Kevin Hart and Michael Signer (eds.), *The Exorbitant: Emmanuel Levinas Between Jews and Christians* (Fordham University Press, 2009).

"The Significance of Franz Rosenzweig's Retrieval of Chosenness," in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 1 (March 2009). Special Issue: "A Covenant to the People, a Light to the Nations": Universalism, Exceptionalism, and the Problem of Chosenness in Jewish Thought" (guest-edited by Dana Hollander and Joel Kaminsky).

"Is Deconstruction a Jewish Science? Reflections on 'Jewish Philosophy' in Light of Jacques Derrida's *Judéités*," *Philosophy Today*, vol. 50, no. 1 (Spring 2006), special issue on "Jewish Philosophy Today," ed. Claire Elise Katz.

"Buber, Cohen, Rosenzweig, and the Politics of Cultural Affirmation," *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 1 (March 2006).

"Some Remarks on Love and Law in Hermann Cohen's Ethics of the Neighbor" in *Journal for Textual Reasoning*, vol. 4, no. 1 (November 2005). Special Issue: "The Ethics of the Neighbor." <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/journals/tr/volume4/index.html>

Jacob Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul* (translation from German; Stanford University Press, 2004)



**Kroeker, Travis. Professor
(Ph.D., Chicago, 1989)
On Leave: Full Year**

Email: kroekert@mcmaster.ca

My teaching and research attend critically to the place of theology and ethics in western thought and culture. I am interested in the intellectual and cultural premises underlying the growing dominance of the technological paradigm in modern and postmodern societies, and in the religious, moral and socio-political implications of this spiritual shift in human self-understanding. I explore these and related questions through the comparative study of classic texts and traditions—the Bible, Plato, Augustine—and modern/postmodern works of literature, philosophy, theology and ethics. Current research interests include messianic ethics and political theology, and the relationship between immortality, ethics and political judgement in selected ancient and modern theologies.

“Living ‘As If Not’: Messianic Becoming or the Practice of Nihilism” *Paul, Philosophy and the Theopolitical Vision*, ed. Douglas Harink (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2010): 37–63.

“Mennonite and Metis: Adjacent Histories, Adjacent Truths?” with Carole Leclair, *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 28 (2010): 187–202.

“The War of the Lamb: Postmodernity and Yoder’s Eschatological Genealogy of Morals,” in *The New Yoder*, ed. Peter Dula & Chris Huebner (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2010): 70–89.

“Rich Mennonites in an Age of Mammon: Is a Messianic Political Economy Possible?” *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 27 (2009): 168–178.

“Messianic Political Theology: Yoder *contra* Redekop,” *Direction* 38/1 (Spring 2009): 67–78.

“Messianic Ethics and Diaspora Communities: Upbuilding the Secular Theologically from Below,” in *Religious Voices in Public Places: Religion and Liberal Reason*, ed. Nigel Biggar and Linda Hogan (Clarendon: Oxford University Press, 2009): 110–130.

“Sexuality and the Sacramental Imagination: It All Turns on Affection,” in *Wendell Berry: Life and Work*, ed. Jason Peters (University of Kentucky Press, 2007): 119–37.



**Machiela, Daniel. Assistant Professor
(Ph.D., Notre Dame, 2007)
On Leave: Term 2**

Email: machiel@mcmaster.ca

My teaching and research interests are situated around the history, literature, archeology, and social milieu of ancient Judaism. This includes the formation and reception of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and the Jewish setting of the New Testament, but my published work has focused especially on the Dead Sea Scrolls and early Jewish interpretation of Scripture. I am currently working on an advanced introduction to the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls, which will deal with issues ranging from scribal characteristics and linguistic dialect to religious worldview and relations to other ancient Jewish literature. In my seminars I tend to encourage direct engagement with primary texts and relevant ancient languages.

The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon (1Q20): A New Text Edition and Translation, with Introduction and Special Treatment of Columns 13-17. (Studies in the Texts of the Desert of Judah; Leiden: Brill; 2009).

The Genesis Apocryphon,” in James H. Charlesworth (ed.) *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts with English Translations* (Volume 8; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck]/Louisville: Westminster John Knox; forthcoming).

“Who is the Aramean in Deut 26:5 and what is He Doing? Evidence of a Minority View from Qumran Cave 1 (1QapGen 19.8).” *Revue de Qumran* 91 (Paris: J. Gabalda, spring 2008).

“Each to Their Own Inheritance: Geography as an Evaluative Tool in the Genesis Apocryphon.” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 15:1 (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

“Jewish Traditions about Noah in Some Syriac Sources.” in *Noah and His Book(s)*, ed. M. E. Stone, A. Amihay, and V. Hillel (Atlanta: SBL, 2010), 237-52.

“Noah,” “The Flood,” and “The Tower of Babel.” Entries forthcoming in the *Dictionary of Early Judaism*; eds J. J. Collins and D. C. Harlow (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008-9).



**Planinc, Zdravko. Associate Professor
(Ph.D., Harvard, 1989)**

Email: planincz@mcmaster.ca

My training is in the history of political philosophy, and my primary areas of interest are the ancient Greeks and twentieth century critics of modernity. My work is in the liberal arts tradition of studying classic authors and texts.

“*The Gad*; or, Prolegomena to a double bill,” in *Subversive Itinerary: Essays in Honour of Gad Horowitz*, editors, S. Bell and P. Kulchyski (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, forthcoming).

“Experiències equivalents de simbolització en Plató i Homer,” trans B. Torres, *L’Anuari de la Societat Catalana de Filosofia* 19 (2008), 133-139.

“Reading The Merchant of Venice with Adorno,” *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* 8/3 (Fall 2007), 20-41.

“Ascending with Socrates: Plato’s Use of Homeric Imagery in the *Symposium*,” *Interpretation* 31/3 (2004), 325-350.

Editor, “Structures of Consciousness,” in Eric Voegelin, *The Drama of Humanity and other miscellaneous papers, 1939-1985*, Vol. 33 of his Collected Works, editors, W. Petropulos and G. Weiss (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004), 351-383.

“‘It Begins with Pyrrhus’: The Political Philosophy of *Hamlet*,” *Hamlet Studies* 20 (1998) 35-49.

Plato Through Homer: Poetry and Philosophy in the Cosmological Dialogues (Columbia : University of Missouri Press, 2003).

“‘...this scattered kingdom’: A Study of *King Lear*,” *Interpretation* 29 (2001), pp. 171-185.

Editor, *Politics, Philosophy, Writing: Plato’s Art of Caring for Souls* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001).



**Rothenberg, Celia Elaine. Associate Professor
(Ph.D. Toronto, 1998)**

Email: rothenb@mcmaster.ca

My research interests lie at the juncture of the anthropology of religion and gender. Specifically, my research to date has addressed the interrelationships among popular religious belief, power, and gender; healing and religion; and notions of what constitutes authentic religion. I have focused most recently on “New Age” Jewish ritual and practices in North America, such as Jewish yoga, Jewish shamanism, and Jewish healing circles. My doctoral fieldwork was with Palestinian Muslims in the Israeli-occupied West Bank; this research focused on men's and women's stories of being possessed by the jinn, or, spirits.

“Islam on the Internet: Stories of the Jinn and the Objectification of Islam.” *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*. (2011). In press.

“Willful Overlooking: Stories from the Islamic Diaspora and the Palestinian West Bank.” *Anthropology and Humanism* 35:1 (2010).

New Age Judaism. Eds. C. Rothenberg and A. Valley. London: Vallentine Mitchell Press, 2008

“New Age Jews: Jewish Shamanism and Jewish Yoga.” *Jewish Culture and History* 8:3 (2006) 1-20.

“Jewish Yoga: Experiencing Flexible, Sacred, and Jewish Bodies.” *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 10: 2 (2006): 57-74.

Spirits of Palestine: Gender, Society and Stories of the Jinn. Maryland: Lexington Press, 2004.



**Rowe, Mark. Associate Professor
(Ph.D., Princeton, 2006)
On Leave: Full Year**

Email: rowemar@mcmaster.ca

I specialize in modern and contemporary Japanese religions, which I approach through a combination of ethnographic, textual, and quantitative methods. I am particularly interested in Buddhism as it is lived in Japan today. My work to date has traced the interplay of religious identity, new family structures, and changing social norms through the matrix of Buddhist responses to radical shifts in contemporary Japanese burial practices.

My future research will focus on post-war temple Buddhism through a multi-sited examination of both the current realities of Buddhist temples and the training and background of the priests who run them. Other interests include ethnography, religion and technology, ritual theory, festivals, and the classification of religion.

“Natural Funerals and the Grave Free Promotion Society in Contemporary Japan” in *The Buddhist Dead: Practices, Discourses and Representations*, edited by Bryan Cuevas and Jacqueline Stone, 234–65. Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism 20. University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007.

“Gaikokujin kara mita Nihonjin no Shiseikan” (An Outsider’s Look at Japan views of death). *Banki* 76 (2005) 11–19.

“Where the Action Is: Sites of Contemporary Sōtō Buddhism” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 31/2 (2004) 357–88.

“Buddhism in Contemporary Japan: Teachings, Doctrines, and Practices.” Editors’ introduction written with Stephen Covell. *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 31/2 (2004) 245–54.

“Stickers for Nails: The Ongoing Transformation of Roles, Rites, and Symbols in Japanese Funerals.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 27/3-4 (2000) 353–78.



**Runesson, Anders. Associate Professor
(Ph.D. Lund, 2001; Docent, Lund, 2002)**

Email: runess@mcmaster.ca

My research interests lie primarily in the Jesus movement and the texts it left behind, Second Temple Judaism, and ancient synagogues. I am also interested in epistemology and methodology. Most of my research revolves around socio-historical questions, but I engage in literary critical approaches as well. Currently, my main area of focus is identity formation in the early Jesus movement and various forms of interaction between religious groups in antiquity. Ongoing projects include a monograph on the Gospel of Matthew/Matthean communities, and a book on Jews, Christians and 'Others'. I am also co-authoring a study on Paul. I have an interest in contemporary inter-religious encounters and have been involved in religious dialogue, especially Jewish/Christian dialogue, for many years.

Runesson, Anders, Donald D. Binder, and Birger Olsson. *The Ancient Synagogue: From its Origins to 200 C.E. A Source Book*. Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 72. Leiden: Brill, 2008. (328 pages + foldout map.)

Runesson, Anders. "Inventing Christian Identity: Paul, Ignatius, and Theodotus I." Pages 59-92 in *Exploring Early Christian Identity*. Edited by Bengt Holmberg. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.

Runesson, Anders. "Re-Thinking Early Jewish-Christian Relations: Matthean Community History as Pharisaic Intragroup Conflict." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127:1 (2008) 95-132.

Runesson, Anders. "From Where to What? Common Judaism, Pharisees, and the Changing Socio-Religious Location of the Matthean Community." Pages 97-113 in *Common Judaism: Explorations in Second Temple Judaism*. Edited by Wayne McCready and Adele Reinhartz. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.

Runesson, Anders. "Judgment." Pages 457-466 in *The New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 3. Edited by Katherine Doob Sakenfeld et al. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008.

Runesson, Anders. "Architecture, Conflict, and Identity Formation: Jews and Christians in Capernaum From the 1st to the 6th Century." Pages 231-57 in *Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in Ancient Galilee: A Region in Transition*. Edited by Jürgen Zangenberg, Harold W. Attridge, and Dale Martin. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.



**Schuller, Eileen. Professor
(Ph.D., Harvard, 1984)**

Email: schuller@mcmaster.ca

In recent years my research and graduate teaching have been in the area of Judaism in the Second Temple period, with a special focus on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and topics related to the women in the period. In my undergraduate work, I teach courses in the main areas of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and Early Judaism.

Since the early 1980s, I have been involved in the edition and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls. I was assigned a section of texts that belong to the "prayers and psalms" category. My contributions to the official series Discoveries in the Judaean Desert (Oxford Press) include Non-Canonical Psalms, 4Q380 and 4Q381, DJD XI (1998); the Cave 4 Hodayot, 4Q427-432, and Hodayot-Like A, B, C, 4Q433, 433a, 440, DJD XIX (1999); Narrative and Psalm Work a,b,c, 4Q371-373, DJD XXXVIII (2001; with Moshe Bernstein); 1QHodayot a with Incorporation of 1QHodayot b and 4QHodayot a-f (2008; with Hartmut Stegemann; DJD XL).

I was an Associate Editor for the two-volume *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford University Press, 2000) and for the five-volume *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (2006 - 2010). I am now working on a commentary on the *Hodayot* for the Hermeneia series (Augsburg Fortress).

"Canadian Scholarship on the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at Sixty*, ed. Jean Duhaime and Peter Flint, Early Judaism and Its Literature Series, Society of Biblical Literature/Brill; also to be published in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Scholarly Perspective: A History of Research*, ed. Devorah Dimant; Leiden: Brill (forthcoming).

Entry on "Woman (ʿissah)" in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zu den Qumrantexten*, Vol. I, ed. By H-J Fabry, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer (2011) 309-17.

"The Canon of the Old Testament," in *The New Interpreter's One Volume Commentary*, Nashville: Abingdon Press (2010) 944-948.

"The Dead Sea Scrolls and Jewish-Christian Dialogue," in *Early Jewish and Christian Influences: Festschrift for Thomas H. Tobin, S.J.*, ed. P. Walters; Leiden: Brill (2010) 48-58.

Articles on "Hodayot" and "Apocryphal Psalms," in *Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. J.J. Collins and D. Harlow, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans (2010).

"Women in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Research in the Past Decade and Future Directions," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Contemporary Culture: Proceedings of the International Conference held at the Israel Museum (July 6-8, 2008)*, ed. A. Roitman, L. H. Schiffman, S. Tzoref; Leiden: Brill, (2010) 571-588.

"The Thanksgiving Hymns (Hodayot)," *The Qumran Scrolls and their World* [In Hebrew, *Scrolls of Qumran*] edited by Menahem Kister; Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 2009, 261–74.



Takim, Liyakat. Professor
(Ph.D. School of Oriental and African Studies, 1990)
Sharjah Chair in Global Islam email: Itakim@mcmaster.ca
On Leave: Full Year

Email: Itakim@mcmaster.ca

My initial research interest lay in the area of charisma and the struggle for authority in the classical period of Islam. I explored a field that had hitherto remained largely untouched by Western scholarship. This culminated in my first book titled: “*The Heirs of the Prophet: Charisma and Religious Authority in Islam.*” This book was published in 2006 and was nominated by CHOICE for an Outstanding Academic Title.

My second book titled *The Shi‘i Experience in America* was published by New York University Press in Fall 2009. My research is also focused on examining the interaction between religion and culture, how Islam has shaped Islamic civic and political consciousness in America, the connection between religious loyalty and ethnic identity and, finally, the role of religious texts and authorities in shaping the religious experience.

Shi‘ism in America. New York: New York University Press, September 2009.

The Heirs of the Prophet: Charisma and Religious Authority in Shi‘ite Islam. Albany: State University of New York, 2006.

“From Pacifism to Activism: Engaging the Muslim Other in America.” *Shi‘a Affairs Journal* (summer 2009).

“Revivalism or Reformation: The Reinterpretation of Islamic Law in Modern Times.” *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 25, no. 3 (2008): 61–81.

“Charismatic Appeal or Communitas? Visitation to the Shrines of the Imams.” In *Contesting Rituals: Islam and Practices of Identity-Making*, ed. Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005.

“The Shi‘ite Tradition in Islam,” in *World Religions: Communities and Cultures*, ed. Jacob Neusner, Abingdon Press, forthcoming in 2010

“From Bid‘a to Sunna: The Wilaya of ‘Ali in the Shi‘i Adhan.” In *Shi‘ism: Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies*, ed. Paul Luft and Colin Turner. Routledge, 2007.

“Peace and Conflict Resolution in the Islamic Tradition.” In *Religion, Terrorism and Globalization, Nonviolence: A New Agenda*, ed. K. Kuriakose. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2006.



Westerholm, Stephen. Professor
(D.Th., Lund, 1978, Docent, Lund, 1983)
On Leave: Full Year

Email: westerho@mcmaster.ca

My research to this point has focused primarily on the synoptic gospels (including issues surrounding the “historical Jesus”) and the Pauline literature of the New Testament, as well as the Septuagint. More recently I have been looking as well at the history of biblical interpretation, and, in particular, on the rise of the “historical-critical method” and responses to it.

The Blackwell Companion to Paul. Edited by Stephen Westerholm. Chichester, U.K: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

“Matthew,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible: One Volume Commentary*, ed. Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Petersen. Nashville: Abingdon, 2010. Pp. 630-657.

“Finnish Contributions to the Debate on Paul and the Law,” in *The Nordic Paul: Finnish Approaches to Pauline Theology*, ed. Lars Aejmelaesus and Antti Mustakallio. London: T & T Clark, 2008. Pp. 3–15.

“Law and Gospel in Jesus and Paul,” in *Jesus and Paul Reconnected: Fresh Pathways into an Old Debate*, ed. Todd D. Still. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007. Pp. 19–36.

“Paul’s Anthropological ‘Pessimism’ in its Jewish Context,” in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole. London: T & T Clark, 2006. Pp. 71–98.

Understanding Matthew: The Early Christian Worldview of the First Gospel. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The “Lutheran” Paul and His Critics. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

Understanding Paul: The Early Christian Worldview of the Letter to the Romans. Second edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.



**Widdicombe, Peter. Associate Professor
(D.Phil., Oxford, 1990)**

Email: widdicom@mcmaster.ca

My research interests lie in Patristics, the history of doctrine, systematic theology, and artistic representation. My writing has dealt with Trinitarian and Christological thought, and with scriptural interpretation, in the early church. Justin Martyr, Origen, Athanasius, and Augustine are among the principal Patristic authors I study; Barth and others writing on the doctrines of the Trinity and of Christ are among the principal modern authors. I am particularly interested in how the church has used Scripture and philosophy in the development of these doctrines, and how these doctrines are expressed in the context of modern and post-modern thought. I also have an interest in Christian ethics. Presently, I am writing a book on the interpretation of the Drunkenness of Noah in text and art from the early Church through the Reformation.

Forthcoming: “Patristic Biblical Interpretation,” *New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*.

“The Drunkenness of Noah and the Patristic Legacy in Text and Art,” *Studia Patristica*.

“The Two Thieves of Luke 23: 32-43 in Patristic Exegesis,” *Studia Patristica*. Vol. XLII (2006) 273–80.

“The Wounds and the Glorified Body: The Marks of Crucifixion in the Ascended Christ from Justin Martyr to John Calvin”, *Laval Théologique et Philosophique* 59 (2003) 137–54.

“*Ascension and Ecclesia* and Reading the Fathers”, *Laval Théologique et Philosophique* 58 (2002) 165–76.

“Justin Martyr’s Apophaticism,” *Studia Patristica* XXXVI (2001) 313–9.

“The Fathers on the Father in the Gospel of John”, *Semeia* 85 (2001) 105–125.

The Fatherhood of God from Origen to Athanasius. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, revised edition, 2000.



Professors Emeriti

J. G. Arapura (Ph.D. Columbia) Indian Philosophies of Religion

A. E. Combs (Ph.D. Columbia) Hebrew Bible

P. Granoff (Ph.D. Harvard) Buddhism & East Asian Religions, Hinduism & Jainism

L. Greenspan (Ph.D. Brandeis) Religion & Modern Social & Political Thought

Y.-h. Jan (Ph.D. Visva-Bharati) Buddhism in China

A. Mendelson (Ph.D. Chicago) Hellenistic Judaism

J. J. Mol (Ph.D. Columbia) Sociology of Religion

J.R. Robertson (Ph.D. Yale) Christian Thought & Western Philosophy

K. Shinohara (Ph.D. Columbia) Buddhism & East Asian Religions

G. Vallée (D.Th. Münster) History of Christian Thought

P. Younger (Ph.D. Princeton) Indian Religious Tradition & Contemporary India

Retired Faculty

G. MacQueen (Ph.D. Harvard) Indian Buddhism

Adjunct Faculty

Dr. Annette Reed (Ph.D. Princeton), Assistant Professor, University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Adele Reinhartz (Ph.D., McMaster), Professor, University of Ottawa



LIBRARY RESOURCES

The McMaster University Library System is one of the finest research libraries in Canada. Present holdings include over 2 million volumes (20,000 print and electronic journal titles and an additional 200,000 e-resources. Mills Memorial Library contains the Humanities and Social Sciences collection. Religious Studies has historical had a high priority in the acquisitions policies of the University Librarians, and the library has comprehensive holdings in those areas in which the department conducts doctoral programmes. In addition, Mills Library operates an efficient inter-library loan system, and members of the McMaster community have access to other Ontario university libraries through the Inter-University Borrowing Project of the Ontario Council of University Libraries.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Faculty are active in a wide variety of professional societies, both national and international; in recent years, members of our faculty have served, for example, on the executive of the Social Sciences Federation of Canada, Canadian Anthropological Society, Canadian Society of Biblical Studies, Canadian Society of Patristic Studies, and various steering committees of the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Academy of Religion. A number of our graduate students have also served as student members of the executive of professional societies.

The Department of Religious Studies has an active Visiting Speakers Program. Under the auspices of the Visiting Hooker Professorships, a leading scholar is invited to give a series of lectures and spend a few days in the department. Past Hooker Professors have included John Rosenfield, Harvard University (1995); Oliver O'Donovan, Oxford University (1996); David Schulman, Hebrew University (1998); John J. Collins, University of Chicago (1999); Dr. Stanley Hauerwas, Duke University (2000); Dr. Franciscus Verellen, Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient, Hong Kong (2001); Dr. Dale Allison, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (2003); Dr. Tony Walter, University of Reading, U.K. (January 2004); Dr. Donald F. McCallum, University of California, Los Angeles (September 2004); Dr. Gary Anderson, Notre Dame University (March 2006); Dr. Saba Mahmood, University of California at Berkeley (March 2007); Dr. Gregory Schopen, University of California, Los Angeles (October 2007); Dr. Lee Levine, Hebrew University (November 2008); Dr. Robin Jenson, Vanderbilt University (October 2009) and Dr. Jacqueline Stone, Princeton University (November 2010). This year we are pleased to welcome Dr. John Barclay, Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University (September 2011).

One- or two-day Colloquiums are held annually on topics of interest to all areas of the department: "Pilgrimage: Perspectives from Divers Religious Traditions" (1995); "Immortality" (1997); "Traditions in Dialogue: Religion and the Arts" (1998); "Heaven, Immortality and the Afterlife" (2001); "Religion and Healing" (2002). In conjunction with the Department of English, a conference was held on "Frye and the Word: Religious Contexts in the Criticism of Northrup Frye" in May, 2000. In conjunction with the Canada Research Chair in Modern Jewish Thought, a conference was held on "A Covenant to the People, A light to the Nations" in May, 2005.

The University of Toronto/McMaster University Yehan Numata Buddhist Studies Program sponsors a regular season of speakers and conferences at both universities. In 2006, the University of Toronto hosted “Whither Buddhist Studies? A Workshop on Buddhist Studies Doctoral Education in North America.” In 2007, an international conference on “Buddhism’s Occult Technologies” was held at McMaster. In 2009, faculty from both universities organized a conference on “Buddhist Training in Japan.” A successful international conference on Buddhist nuns in India, organised by Dr. Shayne Clarke, was held in Toronto in April 2011. Plans are underway for a conference on Theravâda Buddhism to be held in March 2012. Details of past, present and future speakers and other events in Buddhist Studies may be found here:

<http://buddhiststudies.chass.utoronto.ca/category/events/numata/>

A conference entitled “Jewish Philosophy: Past Approaches, New Directions,” convened jointly by the Canada Research Chair in Modern Jewish Thought, McMaster University, and the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, King’s University College at the University of Western Ontario, was held April 20-22, 2009.

In addition to these more formal events, on Wednesday afternoons there are often lectures by visiting speakers, or presentations of current research by department faculty and graduate students.

The Lillian and Marvin Goldblatt Lecture in Jewish Studies was established in 2002.

Past lectures have been:

Reuven Firestone (Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles) – “Divine Authority and Mass Violence: Holy War in Judaism, Christianity and Islam” (2002)

Michael Marrus (University of Toronto) – “Jacques Maritain, the Vatican, and the Holocaust: A Plea Unanswered” (2003)

Judith Baskin (University of Oregon) – “Dying for God: Piety and Gender in Jewish Medieval Martyrdom Narratives” (2004)

David Biale (University of California, Davis) – “Picturing God: Representation of the Divine Body in Medieval Kabbalah” (2006)

Susannah Heschel (Dartmouth College) – “Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity: Reflections on the Life and Thought of Abraham Joshua Heschel” (2007)

Lee Levine (Hebrew University) – “Why is the Greek Sun-god (Helios) Depicted in Ancient Synagogue Mosaics?” (2008)

Lawrence H. Schiffman (New York University) – “Scrolling Through Scripture: The Bible and its Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls” (2009)

Norma Joseph (Concordia University) (2011)

2. ADMISSIONS

All inquiries relating to admission to the graduate programmes in Religious Studies should be directed to:

Graduate Admissions
Department of Religious Studies
McMaster University
Hamilton, ON L8S 4K1
CANADA

DATE FOR APPLICATION

Applications for admission to the graduate programmes in Religious Studies are processed in the beginning of February. Applicants wishing to be considered for scholarships and teaching assistantships must have submitted their applications by January 15th. Applications received after that date can be considered for admission only. Admission to a graduate programme is normally effective in September, though applications for January admission are considered.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

PLEASE NOTE:

All application for admission must be completed on line, including the application fee of \$100.00, through the McMaster University website – <http://www.mcmaster.ca/graduate/online.htm>. This fee is non-refundable and must be paid in Canadian dollars by means of a credit card payment or a cheque (or world money order) drawn on a Canadian bank made payable to McMaster University. **CHEQUES (OR WORLD MONEY ORDERS) DRAWN ON CANADIAN BANKS SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE A \$15.00 PROCESSING FEE FOR A TOTAL OF \$115.00.** If you pay the application fee by cheque or world money order, please send the cheque (or world money order) to the following address:

School of Graduate Studies
McMaster University
Gilmour Hall, Room 212
1280 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON Canada L8S 4L8

PLEASE NOTE: Under the section ‘Application Data’, the proposed area of specialization refers to your major area of study (see pages 1 through 4 of this Handbook)

Supporting documents **MUST BE SENT DIRECTLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**, not to the School of Graduate Studies. Incorrect mailing will delay processing.

A COMPLETE APPLICATION TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM CONSISTS OF ALL THE DOCUMENTS LISTED BELOW. If possible, please submit ALL documents (except the application form which must be processed online) TOGETHER, in a SINGLE envelope, with each letter of recommendation enclosed in a sealed envelope and signed across the flap by the referee, as well as a

sealed official transcripts to the following address:

Graduate Administrator
Department of Religious Studies
University Hall, Room 105
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario
Canada L8S 4K1

- One copy of official transcripts from every university, or post-secondary institution attended to date
- A statement of research interest in pursuing graduate studies (approximately 500-700 words). Please include in your statement of research interest a description of your background and proficiency in foreign languages, detailing the courses you have taken, the levels, and the grades that you received for them.
- Two confidential letters of recommendation (the department welcomes three) from instructors most familiar with your academic work (recommendations should be sent directly from the instructors to the Department of Religious Studies) -- referees should use the form entitled, "Confidential Report on Applicant for Admission to Graduate Studies at McMaster University" (available through the McMaster University website -- <http://www.mcmaster.ca/graduate/forms.html>)
- A writing sample (an essay or thesis chapter)
- Where English is not the native language of the applicant, an official copy of a TOEFL score above 580 (or 237 on the computer-based TOEFL test), or equivalent evidence of competence in English, is required
- If it is necessary for referees and/or institutions to send their documents directly to us, that is acceptable

Applications are assessed by the departmental Graduate Affairs Committee with faculty representation from the different fields of the graduate programme and include graduate student representation. The recommendations of the committee are forwarded to the Graduate Admissions and Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Letters of acceptance are sent by the School of Graduate Studies

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.A.

The normal minimum requirement for admission to M.A. study is graduation with B+ standing (in the final two years) in an Honours programme or equivalent in Religious Studies, or in a related discipline with significant emphasis on the study of religion. Related disciplines include Anthropology, Sociology, History, Philosophy, Theology, Political Science, Classics, and Near Eastern, South Asian, and East Asian studies. Graduates with preparation in related fields may be required to take a certain amount of undergraduate work in Religious Studies.

Admission is competitive; applicants who meet minimum requirements are not guaranteed admission.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D.

Students are admitted to the Ph.D. programme at one of three stages of their academic work. Normally they have completed the M.A. degree. The primary requirements in these cases are distinction in their previous graduate work (equivalent to at least a McMaster B+) and strong letters of reference. Admission is competitive; meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission.

During their first year of study in the M.A. programme at McMaster students can apply for acceptance into the Ph.D. programme. The department recommends to the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study one of the following:

- (a) admission to Ph.D. studies following completion of the requirements for the Master's degree;
- (b) admission to Ph.D. studies without completion of a Master's programme;
- (c) admission to Ph.D. studies but with concurrent completion of all requirements within one calendar year from the date of reclassification;
- (d) refusal of admission to Ph.D. studies.

A student in (b) may re-register as a candidate for the Master's degree, provided that work to date has met the standards for the Master's programme.

Students in (c) who do not complete the requirements for the Master's degree within the year lost their status as a Ph.D. candidate.

Ph.D. level course requirements can only be undertaken after the student has been admitted to doctoral level study.

In exceptional cases an applicant with an honors degree in Religious Studies or a broad and comprehensive theological education may be admitted directly to Ph.D. study. Within one calendar year the progress of students admitted to Ph.D. studies directly from a bachelor's degree must be reviewed by their supervisory committee and the department. The department then recommends to the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study one of the following: (a) proceed with Ph.D. studies; (b) not proceed with Ph.D. studies but re-register as a Master's candidate; (c) withdraw from the university.

A student admitted directly to the Ph.D. program may re-register as a candidate for the Master's degree. In this case, and also in the case of students in (b), the Master's degree is not awarded until all the requirements for this degree have been met.

Language Prerequisites for Admission to the Ph.D. Programme

Candidates applying for admission to the Ph.D. programme will normally be required to demonstrate sufficient competency in foreign languages to ensure their effective participation in the doctoral programme and to facilitate its timely completion.

Ph. D. applicants in the Biblical field should have acquired competence in one biblical language (Hebrew or Greek) and one foreign language of modern scholarship; they are also advised to begin study of the second biblical language, or of a second foreign language of modern scholarship, prior to the inception of their doctoral programme.

Ph.D. applicants in the Asian field should have begun the study of Sanskrit or Chinese or Japanese.

Ph. D. applicants in the Western field should have acquired competence in one of their required languages.

Interested students who have not acquired such competence are urged to contact the department to explore ways for preparing to meet the requirements.

3. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR M.A. AND PH.D. STUDENTS

Courses

For purposes of this Handbook, a course means a defined plan of study/teaching meeting on a regular basis for two consecutive academic terms. There are half courses (three unit) and full courses (six unit); half courses are marked with an asterisk.

The department recognizes a particular merit in courses where a number of people meet together regularly. In the light of this, in normal circumstances, a minimum of two-thirds of the course work requirements for any degree should be met by courses that are not individually arranged.

When an arrangement is made between a student and a faculty member for an individually-oriented course to be taken for credit, a form must be filled out and submitted to the Graduate Affairs Committee. The Committee will arrange for the assignment of a course number.

Religious Studies *701

RS *701 Issues in the Study of Religions, is required of all students (M.A. students and Ph.D. students who have not done this course as part of their M.A.). It offers a forum for the discussion of issues central to the field of religion, and for the exploration of recent developments.

This course is normally offered in the first term.

SGS / 101 Academic Research Integrity and Ethics

The Graduate Calendar states that “all graduate students (including part-time students, must complete the course SGS #101 - Academic Research Integrity and Ethics within the first twelve months after their admission to graduate studies at McMaster. The purpose of this course is to ensure that the standards and expectations of academic integrity and research ethics are communicated early and are understood by incoming students. A graduate student may not obtain a graduate degree at McMaster without having passed this course.”

To access the course material, students should visit “Avenue to Learn” at <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca> and click on the “McMaster e-Learning” button. Your MacID and Password are required to access “Avenue to Learn.”

SGS / 201 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Training

The Graduate Calendar states that “all graduate students are required to complete training on the Accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities Act (OADA), which can be completed on-line at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility>. Having an understanding of how we can identify and reduce attitudinal, structural, information, technological and systemic barriers to persons with disabilities is core to McMaster University’s commitment to supporting an inclusive community in which all persons are treated with dignity and equality, and completion of OADA training is critical as McMaster’s graduates move forward in their varied, chosen professions. Students may not graduate or register for subsequent years in their program until they have completed their required training.”

Breadth Requirement

All students must fulfill the breadth prerequisite consisting of six units (two semesters) of undergraduate work in Asian religions beyond the first-year level. This is a part of the admissions requirement for both M.A. and Ph.D. programmes. The letter of admission will indicate if this requirement has not been met prior to entry into the graduate programme; in these cases students are allowed to make up for this deficiency by taking the required units of undergraduate courses in Asian religions as an additional part of their graduate programme. All courses (except language courses) listed in the McMaster undergraduate calendar under the heading Asian religions are acceptable.

Another option is to write one or two Breadth Requirement examinations instead of 3 or 6 units of undergraduate courses. The regulations for these examinations are available in the departmental office, UH 105. Students needing to fulfill the requirement must do so early in their degree programme.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

The minimum language requirement for the M.A. is a demonstrated ability in the language other than English which is most likely to be of assistance in the student's research. The minimum Ph.D. requirement is competence in two such languages. Work in several areas of the department entails additional language requirements, as specified below.

Responsibility for the choice of the language(s) to be examined lies with the advisory/supervisory committee which acts in accordance with individual area requirements, where such exist. In some cases, additional languages or more advanced levels of language competence may be required by the advisory/supervisory committee.

The language requirement(s) should be met in one of the following ways:

- (1) Where a student has already done course work in the relevant language at the university level, a grade of B in a full year (six unit) second level, or above, university course (if taken elsewhere, equivalent to the relevant McMaster course) taken within the last five years is generally considered adequate for fulfilling the requirement in the language.
- (2) Language exams in French and German are set by the department and normally graded by readers in the French and German departments. B- is the minimum passing grade. French and German exams are normally taken at three set times during the year (see Calendar of Dates). When the university offers facilities for examination (e.g., Latin, Spanish), the passing of the relevant examination will fulfill the requirement.
- (3) Where languages are proposed for which no university offerings are available, the advisory/supervisory committee is responsible for arranging for the examination of the language.
- (4) Where the language chosen is the student's native language, and his or her knowledge of that language is of university level, the language requirement in that language may be understood as having been fulfilled.

Final judgment on fulfilment of the minimum language requirements rests with the student's advisory committee, whose decisions are subject to departmental approval.

Language requirements should normally be met within 36 months of the beginning of the Ph.D. programme.

Language Requirements: Asian Field

Buddhism and East Asian Religions

For M.A. students and Ph.D. students whose theses involve thematic or comparative studies, two years' study of Sanskrit or Japanese or Chinese is normally required. For Ph.D. students, the requirement must be met for a second language as well.

For Ph.D. students whose theses, in the judgment of the supervisory committee, require analyses of texts in the original languages, (a) three years of Sanskrit or Japanese or Chinese, and (b) two years of a second language from this list are required.

Further language competence may be required by the supervisory committee where the thesis topic warrants it.

Language Requirements: Biblical Field

Early Judaism

M.A. students must complete language requirements in Hebrew and a modern language, usually French or German.

Ph.D. students must complete language requirements in Greek and two modern languages (usually French and German) as well as the equivalent of three years of undergraduate courses in Hebrew.

Early Christianity

M.A. students must complete language requirements in Greek and a modern language, usually French or German.

Ph.D. students must complete language requirements in Hebrew and two modern languages (usually French and German) as well as the equivalent of three years of undergraduate courses in Greek.

Language Requirements: Western Field

M.A. students must complete requirements in the language most likely to be of assistance in the student's research. Ph.D. students must complete requirements for two such languages.

THE M.A. PROGRAMME

Requirements

For the M.A., degree students are required to:

- complete the required coursework
- complete the Asian Breadth Requirement (see Handbook, p. 27)
- demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language (language requirements specific to the various fields are described above)
- do a thesis or a project showing some measure of independent competence in dealing with a limited but significant question

(See Guidelines for M.A. & Ph.D. Proposals, p. 35)

Students entering the M.A. programme should nominate an advisory committee of at least two faculty members by the third Wednesday in October. The chair of the committee should be a faculty member from the student's major area of study. The advisory committee will discuss with candidates their interests and course of study. It will advise the student on whether to write a thesis or do a project.

Courses

The normal procedure for students working toward the M.A. degree is to take seven graduate-level half courses:

- four half courses in the major area of study,
- two half courses in the minor area of study, and
- R.S. *701 (see above)

Four of these half courses must be in Religious Studies; two half courses may be taken outside the department in a relevant area of study. To receive the M.A. degree, the student must have at least B-standing in these courses.

Thesis or Project (See Guidelines for Proposals, p 35)

A thesis deals with a specific topic of research and includes the scholarly presentation of the results. It should show an ability to deal with primary material on a limited problem. Text-critical studies or translation with commentary may also be proposed.

A project normally covers broad areas of learning. It is designed to permit students to move into new areas, to read large and unfamiliar bodies of texts, and to deal comprehensively with large questions.

The basic difference between the two kinds of written documents is that a thesis attempts to arrive at some conclusion and to justify that conclusion with appropriate evidence. A project report, on the other hand, is not argumentative but informative. It recounts the research done by the student. Argument may fill the account, but it is argument merely reported on. Whereas a thesis argues for the

certain or probably truth of a conclusion, a project report narrates what the anticipations of the inquiry were and whether they were realized or disappointed; what the strategy of the research was and what changes, if any, it underwent; finally, what the results were, positive and negative.

Areas in which a candidate may conduct thesis and project research are limited by available faculty and library resources. Candidates should not assume that they may write on any subject in the whole field of religious studies.

Where the thesis or the project route is agreed upon, the advisory committee helps the student to settle on a topic. The student writes a formal proposal, two to three pages in length (300–600 words), with a brief bibliography.

The proposal is submitted first to the student's committee for the approval and signature of each member. The committee chair submits the proposal to the Graduate Affairs Committee for approval, together with a recommendation for the supervisory committee. The supervisory committee may or may not be the same as the advisory committee.

The Graduate Affairs Chair will notify the student and the chair of the newly formed supervisory committee of the decision. The approval of the proposal and the composition of the supervisory committee will be reported for information at the next regular Department Meeting.

Procedure for Submitting an M.A. Thesis /Project for Defence

The following form (available on the Religious Studies website at <http://www.religiousstudies.mcmaster.ca/graduate-program/forms>) must be submitted in conjunction with your supervisor, to the Chair of the Department:

1. “Intention of Candidate to Submit M.A. Thesis/Project
(To be submitted to the Chair of the Department at least four weeks before the anticipated date of defence.)

This will facilitate the coordination of arrangements necessary for M.A. defences.

A completed thesis must be examined by a committee of not fewer than three members (including the supervisor). When the supervisory committee consists of only two members, a third member is appointed by the department chair. The thesis is defended by the candidate in an oral examination before this committee. Both the written thesis and its oral defence must be deemed satisfactory. One electronic copy of the thesis must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies through the E-Thesis Submission module in Digital Commons. In addition, the Department of Religious Studies requires one bound copy of the thesis. The Department will reimburse students for the cost of binding. Information regarding final submission of theses can be found on the Graduate Studies website at: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/651-step3-final-submission>.

A completed project must be examined by at least two faculty members appointed by the area. This examination of the project may be oral or written, or both. During the examination, the student is expected to be able to give a clear account of the project research, and to present evidence of its scope and significance. A copy of the project report is kept in the departmental library. The Department will reimburse students for the cost of binding this departmental copy.

THE PH.D. PROGRAMME

Requirements

For the Ph.D., students are required to:

- complete the required coursework
- complete the Asian Breadth Requirement (see Handbook, p. 27)
- have a reading knowledge of at least two foreign languages (language requirements specific to the various fields are described above)
- pass comprehensive examinations in major and minor fields
- defend a thesis which is a significant and original scholarly contribution

See Guidelines for M.A. & Ph.D. Proposals, p. 35

By the third Wednesday in October in their first year, each candidate will nominate an advisory committee of at least three members. Normally, a Ph.D. advisory committee consists of the principal advisor from the student's major area of study, a second advisor, and a minor area representative.

Courses

Students working toward the Ph.D. must take at least five half courses at the graduate level at McMaster beyond the M.A. For information about RS *701, Issues in the Study of Religions, and the Asian Breadth Requirement, see p. 26. RS *701 may not be counted among the five half courses required for the Ph.D. degree. Additional courses may be required by the candidate's advisory committee.

Students who have completed an M.A. elsewhere must normally complete at least one half course in the minor area of study. Students who have completed an M.A. in the Department of Religious Studies at McMaster do not have to do additional course work in the minor area, though they are encouraged to do so.

Three half courses must be in Religious Studies; two half courses may be taken outside the department in a relevant area of study. Exceptions may be made by the candidate's advisory committee.

To receive the Ph.D. degree, the student must have at least B- standing in each of the required courses.

Comprehensive Examinations

Each doctoral student must write two comprehensive exams, one in the major area of study and the other in the minor area of study. Normally, comprehensive examinations are taken after the completion of the required coursework.

An essential implication of the Ph.D. degree at McMaster is that the holder has a comprehensive breadth of knowledge and a maturity of approach to a wide range of topics within the discipline. The comprehensive examinations test this knowledge and maturity.

The examinations are meant to examine the adequacy of the student's habitual knowledge. This means, negatively, that the examinations are not meant to test the student's research capacities, or command of the recondite research data that might go into a doctoral dissertation. Positively, it means that the examinations test the student's hold on general knowledge: the kind of knowledge that all persons in the field are presumed to have.

The habitual knowledge in question is a hold on evidence, not merely a catalogue of opinions. It might largely consist of information, but the information should be selective, relevant to issues, and up-to-date. It would allow the student to define the main issues in the discipline and to say on what basis they are diversely viewed by diverse schools of thought.

Within these general parameters, the comprehensive examinations take somewhat different forms in each field. It is important that students begin discussion about their examinations with their advisory committee early in their program, certainly by the spring committee meeting in their first year. Each area provides a basic reading list for comprehensive examinations which the student should obtain in the early stages of their programme.

Students are advised to consult the Chair of their Advisory Committee regarding the format and questions for both their major and minor comprehensive examinations. Faculty members may choose to have the questions they have written kept in a file in the Departmental office to be shown to future candidates. If they choose to do so, they must indicate in some way which of the questions were specifically written in the light of the particular research interests of the candidates who wrote the examination. This file will be reviewed periodically and the questions from examinations written over five years earlier will be removed from the file. Faculty members may also choose to make available previous questions to students in person, with proper explanations, or to describe the kind of questions given to the candidate in other ways.

In accordance with the regulations set by the Graduate School, comprehensive examinations are to be completed within 24 months of the beginning of the Ph.D. programme.

Comprehensive examinations are written at four times during the year: the second and third weeks in September; the second and third weeks in January; the first and second weeks in May, and the first and second weeks in July.

Students should indicate their intention to take a comprehensive examination during one of the periods scheduled for their writing by filling out the required form at least one month before the date of writing. Exceptionally, if a student wishes to write outside the set dates for reasons of personal circumstances, the supervisor of the student is to put the request to the Chair of Graduate Affairs, who will make the decision in consultation with the Chair of the Department, and advise the supervisor accordingly.

In writing the major examination, the student will be allowed a minimum of eight and a maximum of ten hours; the hour limits for the minor examination will be six and eight. The major examination will generally be taken in two equal parts and on different days. One of these two parts may be taken orally; in this case, the time limits will be appropriately adjusted.

The scope of the comprehensive examinations is determined by each area; the questions for the examinations must be set by a faculty member from the area in which the examination is being taken. The questions are to be submitted one week in advance of the examination to the office of the

department chair, which administers the examination. The questions are to be included in the student's permanent file.

Each examination is to be graded by two faculty examiners, both members of the field in which the examination is being written; the first reader must be a faculty member from the area of the examination. Results of the comprehensive examinations are to be announced to the student within one month of the last examination. A grade of B- or above is required for passing the examination. A "Pass with distinction" is awarded when the student achieves an average grade of A (numerical 11) or A+ (numerical 12) in both the major comprehensive examination and the minor.

Research projects, done prior to the examination and written outside its framework, are not to be assigned in lieu of a comprehensive examination.

The Thesis

Areas in which a candidate may conduct thesis research are limited by available faculty and library resources. Candidates should not assume that they may write on any subject in the whole field of religious studies. Each topic must be carefully examined, defined, and approved by the department. Queries on this matter should be directed, very early in the candidate's career, to their advisory committee.

Within one month of the completion of comprehensive examinations, students should submit a statement of their thesis subject to the Graduate Affairs Committee. At this stage, the statement can be very short (a paragraph). This statement is to be accompanied by the Doctoral Statement Submission form, which must be signed by Chair of the student's advisory committee. Available here: <http://www.religiousstudies.mcmaster.ca/documents/graduate-material/graduate-program-forms/DOCTORAL%20STATEMENT%20SUBMISSION.pdf/view>

At the same time, the student, after consulting with the advisory committee, will submit a "Nomination of a Supervisory Committee" form for the approval of the Graduate Affairs Committee (available here: <http://www.religiousstudies.mcmaster.ca/graduate-program/forms>). This will include the names of three (occasionally four) faculty members who will serve as the supervisory committee for the thesis. The main supervisor of the thesis is to be drawn from the faculty members in the area within which the thesis is being written.

Normally supervisory committees include at least one other faculty member from the department, and where feasible, a faculty member from outside the Department of Religious Studies. In cases where faculty members from other universities are included in the proposed supervisory committee, the chair of the advisory committee will contact that person to ascertain that he or she is prepared to join the committee. After the composition of the proposed supervisory committee has been approved by the Graduate Affairs Committee, the Chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee will request the Dean of Graduate Studies formally to invite the member from another university to join the committee. The Chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee will report the composition of the supervisory committee at the next departmental meeting.

The Thesis Proposal (See Guidelines for Proposals, p. 35)

Within six months of the completion of comprehensive examinations, the student is to submit a thesis proposal to the Graduate Affairs Committee for oral defence and approval. The proposal is to be

roughly five to seven pages in length (1500-2000 words), and is to be accompanied by a brief preliminary bibliography.

The proposal is a formal piece of written work which will be judged for composition, clarity, and style as well as content. While not intended to be a report on research already completed, the proposal should include a clear statement of the question which the thesis is intended to answer, of the method and procedure with which the inquiry is to be pursued, and, in the light of the current state of scholarship, of the contribution which the dissertation can be expected to make.

The careful formulation and defence of a thesis proposal is intended to ensure the project's viability in principle at an early stage in the student's research. Like the oral defence at the completion of the thesis, and in preparation for it, the student presentation to an open session of the Graduate Affairs Committee requires that students demonstrate a capacity to explain their work to educated non-specialists as well as specialists and respond thoughtfully to requests for clarification, objections, and suggestions. Conducted at an early stage in the writing of the thesis, the discussion around the proposal is intended to assist students in focusing on what is essential to its completion. **Please note: the student is not to read the defense of proposal from a prepared script.**

Once the thesis proposal is signed by each member of the student's supervisory committee, the committee chair submits it to the Graduate Affairs Committee for approval. A one-page abstract is, at the same time, circulated to all faculty members. The full proposal is kept in a file in UH-105 and made available to faculty. All interested members of the department are invited to submit written responses to the proposal and/or to participate in that portion of the Graduate Affairs Committee meeting during which the proposal is discussed.

The proposal is evaluated by the Graduate Affairs Committee (no sooner than two weeks after the general circulation of the proposal). The student is required to attend this meeting, and the student's supervisor (or a substitute designated by the supervisory committee) is also expected to attend. The Chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee notifies the student and the chair of the supervisory committee of the Graduate Affairs Committee's decision. The approval of the proposal is reported for information at the next regular department meeting.

Writing and Defence of the Thesis

The final thesis copy should be prepared in accordance with the Graduate School booklet "Guide for the Preparation of Theses." This guide, thesis regulations, forms and information are available through the School of Graduate Studies website at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/graduate/thesint.htm>. Responsibility for compliance with these rules and neat preparation of the final copy rests with the student.

Additional information about the final stages of submission and defence is to be found on the Graduate Studies website at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/graduate/thesint.htm>. The Doctoral Thesis Defence submission system is available on-line. **AFTER** consultation with your supervisory committee regarding a submission/defense date/timeline, the student is responsible for initiating the process through the following link:

<https://sgs-webserver.mcmaster.ca/TBindStudent/Login.aspx>

Completion Deadlines for the Ph.D. Programme

Regulations regarding the time within which various components of the Ph.D. programme are to be completed are set by the department and the Graduate School. This time framework seeks to facilitate the completion of the Ph.D. within the four years for which funding is provided.

- Comprehensive examinations are to be completed within 24 months of the start of the programme.
- One month after the completion of the comprehensives the one-paragraph thesis statement and the form for nominating a supervisory committee must be submitted to the Graduate Affairs Committee.
- The thesis proposal must be submitted to the graduate Affairs Committee within 6 months of the student's completion of the comprehensive examinations.
- Language requirements must be completed within 36 months of the start of the programme.

The advisory/supervisory committee must indicate on the annual or semi-annual report of full-time Ph.D. students those who do not meet these deadlines. In such cases, the supervisor is to indicate in an accompanying note whether progress is deemed unsatisfactory or whether there are extenuating circumstances.

In the latter case, new deadlines for the fulfillment of the requirements are to be indicated on the progress report form, and arrangements made for a new meeting of the committee and the filing of a new report immediately after the date of the revised deadline. Failure to meet the revised deadline will normally result in unsatisfactory progress being indicated.

The chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee is to review all reports and to ensure compliance with these regulations.

Guidelines for M.A. and Ph.D. Proposals

Thesis proposals should be structured around the following six headings. Students may choose to incorporate the headings directly into their proposals, or simply to incorporate the information described under the headings without organizing the proposal explicitly under the six headings. An outline of proposed chapters is also useful.

1. Introduction
2. Research questions
3. The scholarly context
4. Material
5. Method(s)/Perspective(s)/Mode of procedure
6. Bibliography

Introduction. The proposal should begin by stating clearly the subject of the thesis. A brief statement of the importance of the work and its relevance for the field of Religious Studies should follow.

Research Questions. The proposal should make clear what questions the thesis will be posing and trying to answer. The proposal may also suggest an hypothesis that answers the questions.

The scholarly context. The proposal should make clear what is new in the proposed research in relation to earlier studies. The authors referred to here should be in the bibliography, but the bibliography should not be limited to works directly cited in the proposal (see below).

Material. In this section the student should make clear what it is that constitutes the primary data for the thesis. This may be texts or field research. In both cases the student needs to be specific. The student needs to show the committee that he/she knows what texts are important to the research or what questions will be asked in the field.

Method(s)/Perspective(s)/Mode of procedure. Students should be able to show that they think about what they are doing in relation to how they are doing it. Obviously, not everyone will be engaged in extensive methodological discussions, but everyone will have a certain perspective. This section will show the committee that the student is aware of the fact that he or she is studying the chosen problem/question in a certain way and not in another. It will also give the student the chance to show the committee that the perspective or method chosen is better suited than any other method or perspective to accomplish the intended goal.

Bibliography. The bibliography should be carefully presented, with secondary sources separated from primary sources. Sources dealing specifically with methodology may also be put in a separate section of the bibliography. This will make it easier for members of the committee to assess the value of the bibliography.

MA projects. The project proposal should also address all six categories. It should describe the area chosen for research, detail the purpose of the research, and discuss the scholarship on the topic. The bibliography should be carefully selected and the proposal needs to make clear the relevance of the items in the bibliography to the project. The project proposal must also indicate what shape the final written document will take.

*** The Graduate Affairs Committee normally meets on the last Wednesday of the month during term. Please note the “Thesis Proposal Approval” form, which follows and is available on the Department website, must be completed, signed and submitted with your proposal.**

**Department of Religious Studies
McMaster University**

INTENTION OF CANDIDATE TO SUBMIT M.A. THESIS/PROJECT *

I intend to submit my M.A. thesis/project (circle one) for examination and defence.

Title of Thesis/Project:

Expected Date of Submission: _____

Proposed Date and Time of Defense: _____

Date Printed Name of Student Signature of Student

Date Printed Name of Supervisor Signature of Supervisor

Date Printed Name of Committee Member Signature of Committee Member

Date Printed Name of Committee Member Signature of Committee Member

3rd Reader (to be appointed by the Chair of the Department)

*** THIS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT AT LEAST FOUR WEEKS BEFORE THE ANTICIPATED DATE OF DEFENCE.**

4. REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

ADVISORY/SUPERVISORY COMMITTEES

The student's advisory/supervisory committee is responsible for assisting the student in formulating the thesis or project proposal, advising the student as the research proceeds, and assessing its results.

The approval of all committee members is required before a thesis (or project) proposal can be submitted to the Graduate Affairs Committee; the approval of a majority of supervisory committee members is required before a thesis (or project) can proceed to an oral defence. It is therefore imperative that the student not proceed at length on proposal or research work without its progress being reviewed and approved by the committee.

Committees are required to meet twice each year. Additional meetings may be requested by the principal advisor or supervisor (hereafter "chair") of the committee or by the student.

The chair bears primary responsibility for the supervision of the student's programme. Other members of the committee lend their expertise and share responsibility for seeing that the student's work meets the standards of academic competency. The student normally submits his or her work to the chair, who is responsible for passing the work on to other members of the committee. Members of the committee are responsible for communicating their evaluation and comments to the chair as well as to the student. If a committee member recommends substantial revision of the work, the recommendation and its reasons should be communicated in writing to both the chair of the committee and the student.

If, in the opinion of the chair, the evaluation or recommendations of committee members show significant disagreement, the chair will arrange for a committee meeting in which the issues can be discussed. Unresolved disagreement shall be brought to the attention of the chair of Graduate Affairs and/or the chair of the department, who will attempt to mediate. The mediator will write up a summary of the discussions that follow, including any recommendations that are made; the summary is to be made available to the student. If resolution proves impossible, the mediator will recommend to the Graduate Affairs Committee the reconstitution of the student's committee. If this avenue is not sufficient, the student is encouraged to discuss the matter with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

A committee member who resigns from a committee should communicate the reasons for the resignation in writing to the chair of the committee and the student.

When all committee members are in agreement that a thesis (or project) proposal is satisfactory, the student is responsible for seeing that the proposal is initialed by members of the committee and submitted to the Graduate Affairs Committee. When the supervisory committee has approved a thesis or project for oral defence, the supervisor informs the chair of the department in order to initiate defence proceedings.

Summary of Duties of M.A. and Ph.D. Advisory/Supervisory Committees

- Assist in the planning and approving of the student's course work and research; define

major and minor requirements.

- Decide, within departmental regulations, on the timing of the comprehensive examinations and, where applicable, language and other examinations or projects.
- Maintain knowledge of the student's research activities and progress. Give advice on research, usually through the student's supervisor. Perform such other duties as required by the department.
- Meet at least twice each year (Fall and Spring) with all students in residence, and report to the department on the above matters annually.
- Initiate appropriate action if the student's progress is not satisfactory. Any requirement that the student withdraw shall need approval of the department and the Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study.
- Act as internal examiners for the thesis and serve, where appropriate, as members of the final Ph.D. oral examination committee.

Duties of the Department

- Approve the composition and work of the advisory and supervisory committees.
- Review annually each student's course grades and research progress as reported by the committee.
- Conduct major and minor comprehensive examinations.
- Conduct language examinations.
- Name representatives to the final M.A. and Ph.D. oral examination committees.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

The University considers its graduate programme to operate on a twelve-month basis, and scholarships are given accordingly. Students should plan to pursue their studies for the entire year, taking no more than two weeks for vacation.

The summers are normally used to prepare for comprehensive examinations, to conduct thesis research, and to pursue language study. Summer courses in several languages are often available on campus.

STUDENT STATUS, CHANGE-OF-STATUS

The Graduate Calendar makes it clear that all graduate students who have not received degrees and

who wish to be considered students in this University must register and pay fees for each year from their admission until the degree is awarded. This also applies to candidates who have finished their residence requirements but have not submitted their thesis.

Students may apply for various kinds of off-campus status; they all require the consultation of the advisory/supervisory committee, the department, and the Graduate School. Students who are in residence may be granted regular off-campus status to pursue study at another academic institution. In exceptional cases, students may be granted leaves-of-absence, during which time their status in the programme and funding are suspended.

Students who wish to assume any kind of off-campus status should first obtain the relevant information and forms from the School of Graduate Studies website <http://www.mcmaster.ca/graduate/deptforms.html> or UH/104 and then proceed directly to obtain the necessary approvals.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD STUDENTS ABSENT THEMSELVES FROM RESIDENCE WITHOUT SEEING THAT THEIR STATUS IN THE UNIVERSITY IS CLEAR.

According to University regulations, a candidate whose work, in the judgment of the department, has not progressed satisfactorily may be asked to withdraw from the programme at any stage. The normal times for a thorough review of each candidate's work are at the end of the first year and after doctoral comprehensive examinations.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial support from the university is available to full-time students on a competitive basis. The "Plan for Graduate Education at McMaster" sets a minimum guaranteed funding for doctoral students (currently \$17,500 a year for four years).

University Scholarships

The standard graduate scholarships range between \$4,000 and \$9,500. Scholarships are given for the first two years of the M.A. programme and the first four years of the Ph.D. programme.

Outstanding students are eligible for additional university scholarships such as the Harry Lyman Hooker Senior Scholarship, the Ashbaugh and the Dalley Fellowship. The department is responsible for nominating candidates for these awards.

The Abby Goldblatt Memorial Scholarship

To be awarded to a graduate student who demonstrates academic excellence in the study of Early Judaism. The award will be made by the School of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the Chair of the Department of Religious Studies.

Alvin Irwin Ogilvie Graduate Scholarship

To be awarded to a student registered in a Ph.D. program in the Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences. The award is made annually by the Scholarships Committee of Graduate Council on the basis of departmental nominations.

The Julian F. Pas Memorial Scholarship in Chinese Religions

To be awarded to a student in a master's or doctoral program in Chinese Religions (Taoism, Chinese Folk Religion or Chinese Buddhism). The School of Graduate Studies will make the award on the recommendation of the Chair of the Department of Religious Studies.

The Passi Bursary

To be awarded to a graduate student who demonstrates financial need and is studying Hinduism and Jainism. The award will be made by the School of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the Chair of the Department of Religious Studies.

The Krishna Sivaraman Memorial Scholarship

To be awarded to a student in the master's or doctoral program in Hinduism and Indian Philosophy. The School of graduate studies will award the scholarship on the recommendation of the chair of the Department of Religious studies, taking into consideration academic achievement and a demonstrated interest in Hinduism and Indian Philosophy.

Teaching Assistantships

Many full-time students are employed as teaching or research assistants. The salary for this work (negotiated annually) is approximately \$5,122 per term for 2010–11. The maximum duration of guaranteed teaching assistantships is two years for M.A. students and four years for Ph.D. students.

Each student with a teaching assistantship will be assigned in September to work with one of the members of the faculty. Students with teaching assistantships are expected to work the equivalent of ten hours per week during the academic year.

External Awards

As a condition of retaining their McMaster Scholarship funds, all graduate students who are eligible are required to apply for appropriate external awards such as SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) and OGS (Ontario Graduate Scholarships). Application forms and further information are available in September from the department office (UH 105). Information about scholarships and awards is posted regularly on the bulletin board outside the department office.

Student Assistantship Bursaries

There are some funds available for bursaries, awarded on the basis of financial need. Students apply directly to Student Financial Aid.

Travelling Scholarships

Some monies are available for fieldwork and research outside McMaster. Further information and application forms are available from the department office, UH 105.

Mary Margaret Scammel Travel Scholarship:

For a Religious Studies Graduate Student to support travel costs associated with thesis research or language study. Value: \$1,000.00.

Application Date: TBA – usually in February.

James. F. Harvey and Helen. S. Harvey Travel Scholarships:

Three scholarships of \$1,000.00 awarded for graduate students to engage in research requiring travel.

Application Date: TBA – usually in February.

School of Graduate Studies Funding for Field Research:

Contact the Department for further information.

School of Graduate Studies Funding for Archival Research:

Contact the Department for further information.

Graduate Students Association Travel Assistance Grants:

First priority is for research travel; second, for expenses incurred in attending a conference to present a paper, abstract or poster; third, for conference attendance. Application dates are generally in September 2011, January 2012, and May 2012. (Please consult the GSA website for updated application deadlines. <http://www.mcmaster.ca/gsa/applications.html>)

Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, Student Fellowships:

For graduate students to do research or language training in India.

Application Date: In late June or early July for the following year's competition. (Information will be posted on department bulletin board.)

The Freeman Family Foundation Bursary Fund for Study at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Established in May, 2000, this bursary is offered on an annual basis to members of the University at large. The highest priority is given to graduate students who would benefit from study at Hebrew University to complete their theses; second priority is given to graduate students at the pre-thesis stage, especially for language work. Graduate students may apply for sums up to a maximum of \$17,000 for a year's work at Hebrew University; smaller amounts are available for students who want to restrict their study to the summer. For further information, consult with members of the Biblical Field.

Application Date: February (although late applications may be considered).

Limitations on Employment

Full-time graduate students are encouraged to limit time spent on employment both inside and outside the University. They may not be employed more than 10 hours per week (on an average in a term) for work that is paid through McMaster University. Exceptions to this rule are possible with the approval of the School of Graduate Studies. Students are referred to the regulations in the Graduate Calendar, especially 2.4.2 and 2.4.3.

Graduate Diploma (Ph.D.) in Gender Studies and Feminist Research

This diploma is available to students enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Religious Studies. It is intended for students whose research is focused on gender studies, sexuality studies, or feminist research. The diploma aims to enhance the intellectual development and training of students already enrolled in doctoral programs by allowing them to combine disciplinary research with interdisciplinary scholarship from the fields of Gender and Feminist Studies. Students already pursuing Ph.D.s may apply for the Graduate Diploma program during their first year of doctoral studies, to start in their second year. Occasionally, students may be allowed to begin the Graduate Diploma in their third year of the Ph.D., but no later.

The diploma option adds value to a stand-alone doctoral degree in a single discipline by providing concrete and sustained occasions for doctoral students to engage multiple scholarly and pedagogical approaches as these are taken up in seminar meetings and coursework, research symposia and thesis work.

Students completing the diploma will receive the notation “Completed Graduate Diploma in Gender Studies and Feminist Research” on their academic transcript in addition to the doctorate degree from their home graduate unit. Formalizing this additional qualification will help students to be more competitive as they apply for academic jobs in not only Women's and Gender Studies but also traditional disciplines, many of which intersect with and are enhanced by research and teaching in feminist and gender studies.

There are no additional fees (application or tuition) for this program.

Further information can be found at the program website:
<http://gsfr.mcmaster.ca/index.html>

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

The letter of admission from the Dean of Graduate Studies specifies that students should arrive on campus before undergraduate classes begin (normally on the first Thursday following Labour Day; see CALENDAR OF DATES (p. 45). Students holding teaching assistantships are expected to arrive the day after Labour Day.

All incoming graduate students and in-course students are expected to attend an orientation session sponsored by the Department. (Details will be circulated.) The McMaster Graduate Student Day, held annually on the Wednesday following Labour Day, is part of the orientation programme; all tutorial assistants should be available to participate in the programme.

Incoming students should consult with the staff in the department office, UH 104, for registration details and other procedures. At that time students are assigned a desk/carrell in one of the basement offices of University Hall; a number of graduate students share each room. All students are given a mail box outside the department office. Mailboxes should be checked frequently.

Much of the communication with students both by the Department and the University takes place via e-mail. Be sure to register for your McMaster e-mail account as soon as you arrive on campus. It is your responsibility to check your e-mail daily.

THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

There is an active graduate students association (GSARS). Each fall GSARS elects an executive, two students to be representatives at department meetings, as well as students to serve on the Graduate Affairs Committee and Colloquium Committee. GSARS sponsors a variety of academic and social events during the year.

QUERIES AND ASSISTANCE

Although this Handbook seeks to cover most of the basic areas of the graduate programme, questions may arise at any stage in the programme. Students are encouraged to seek information and help as needed. Please note that the School of Graduate Studies Calendar is also an important source of information.

Doreen Drew is the Administrative Secretary for graduate affairs. Inquiries regarding procedures may be directed to her either in person in the department office (UH/105), by phone (ext. 23399) or by email to relstud@mcmaster.ca.

Students having difficulties meeting deadlines or with any aspect of their programme are encouraged to discuss these difficulties with members of their committee. Students may also seek assistance or advice from the chair of the Department or the Chair of Graduate Affairs. These two faculty members can offer both formal and informal assistance depending on the needs of the student.

5. CALENDAR OF DATES

If there are discrepancies between these dates and dates in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar, those in the Calendar should be considered correct.

Summer 2011

July 14-Aug. 5 On-line registration will take place from July 14 to Aug. 5, 2011. **NOTE: Students who fail to register during this on-time registration period will be charged a \$50 late fee.** Registration information is available at: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/registration>
An additional \$50 will be charged if the payment agreement is not completed on time.

Please note that the Registration dates of July 14 to Aug. 5 are for academic registration only. GRADUATE COURSE SELECTION DOES NOT NEED TO BE COMPLETED UNTIL AFTER YOU HAVE MET WITH FACULTY.

Incoming students will register for GRADUATE courses after they have met with the faculty on September 9th to discuss their individual programs.

Returning students must contact their supervisor for approval before registering for courses.

If it is your intention to take an UNDERGRADUATE COURSE (language/Asian breadth course, etc.) you must register using the paper form "On-time Undergraduate Course Selection for Graduate Students." It is important to register for these courses as soon as possible as many may have limits on enrolment. Please contact the appropriate department for any necessary seat authorizations/permissions. You **MUST DISCUSS THIS COURSE SELECTION WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR/ADVISOR**. Please contact them ASAP by email/telephone. The completed form is to be returned to Doreen Drew c/o Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 4K1.

July 15	Final date to submit results of incomplete grades for Spring courses
July 22	Final date to submit Ph.D. theses to Graduate Studies (prior to defence) in order to complete within the current academic year (2010-2011).
Aug. 1-Sept. 12	Late registration for students beginning in September. (\$50 late fee applies)
Aug. 19	Final date to submit grades for summer term courses
Aug. 19	Final date to submit Master's theses to departments (prior to defence) in order to complete within the current academic year (2010-2011).

Term 1 – Fall Term – September – December (2011)

Sept. 7	Graduate Student Day
Sept. 7	Meeting of Incoming Graduate Students with Department 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. in University Hall, Room 122
Sept. 8	Undergraduate classes begin N.B. – students with T.A.'s and students taking undergraduate classes (for breadth or language requirements)
Sept. 8	Department Orientation Day 11:45 – 3:30 (See the “Beginning of the Year Events” schedule included in the orientation package that was emailed to you)
Sept. 9	First-year students meet with faculty from their field (See the “Incoming Student Meetings” schedule included in the orientation package that was emailed to you)
Sept. 12-16	Graduate Classes begin (Times and locations of first class meetings will be posted)
Sept. 12-23	COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS...Fall Session
Sept. 14	SSHRC/OGS Department Workshop (further details to come)
Sept. 26-27	HOOKER Visiting Lecturer, Dr. John Barclay, Durham University
Sept. 28	Final date to file theses (for binding) with Graduate Studies and complete degree requirements (for Fall Convocation)
Sept. 30	Final date for adding full courses and first term half-courses
Oct. TBA	OGS deadline for submission of applications with supporting documents to department office
Oct. TBA	SSHRC deadline for submission of applications and supporting documents to department office
Oct. 10	Thanksgiving – no classes
Oct. 14	Final Date for new students to submit nomination of advisory committee form for approval by Graduate Affairs Committee
Oct. 14	Final Date for deleting first term half-courses (after this date all courses will require a grade)
Oct. 19	French and German Language Examinations

Nov. 18	Final date to submit grades for incompletes for summer term courses
Nov. 18	Convocation: All Faculties
Dec. 5	Undergraduate classes end
Dec. 7-21	Undergraduate exam period
Dec. 1-22	On-time registration for new graduate students beginning in January

Term 2 – Winter Term – January – April (2012)

Dec. 23-Jan. 9	Late Registration for new graduate students beginning in January (\$50 late fee applies)
Jan. 2-6	Graduate classes begin (Times and locations of first class meetings will be posted)
Jan. 3	Undergraduate classes begin
Jan. 2-13	COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS... Winter Session
Jan. 9	Final date to submit grades for first-term graduate courses
Jan 11	French and German language examinations
Jan. 13	Final date to delete full courses
Feb. 10	Final date to delete Winter Term half courses
Feb. 20-25	Mid-term recess
Feb. 28	Final date to submit Ph.D. theses to Graduate Studies (prior to defence) for Spring convocation
Mar. 7	French and German language examinations
Mar. 16	Final date to submit results of incomplete grades for first term
April 4	Undergraduate classes end
April 7-25	Undergraduate exam period
April 12-26	On-time registration for new graduate students beginning in May (\$50 late fee applies after this date)
April 25	Final date to file theses (for binding) with Graduate Studies and complete degree requirements for Spring convocation

April 27-May 7 Late registration for new graduate students beginning in May (\$50 late fee applies)

April 30 Final date to submit grades for second term graduate courses

Term 3 – Summer Term – May – August (2012)

April 30-May 11 COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS...Spring Session

May 25 Final date to add full or half courses...Summer term

June 15 Final date to delete courses...Summer term

July 2-13 COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS...Summer Session

July 13 Final date to submit grades for incompletes for Winter term courses

July 20 Final date to submit Ph.D. theses to Graduate Studies in order to complete within the current academic year (2011-2012)

Aug. 17 Final date to submit Master's theses to department in order to complete within the current academic year (2011-2012)

Aug. 31 Final date to submit grades for Summer term courses

LIST OF COURSES

Not all of the courses listed below will be offered each year.
The actual course offerings for the current year, with a brief description,
follow this section.

Half courses are designated with an asterisk

ASIAN

ASIAN RELIGIONS

RS 6X06	Introductory Sanskrit	Staff
RS 6Y06	Introduction to Literary Chinese	Staff

GENERAL COURSES

RS *705	Special Readings in Asian Religions	Staff
RS *706	Topics in Sanskrit Texts	S. Clarke
RS *707	Tools and Methods for the Study of Asian Religions	J. Benn, S. Clarke, M. Rowe
RS *708	Topics in Asian Religions	Staff
RS *709	Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Asian Religions	M. Rowe

BUDDHISM

RS *711	Topics in Buddhist Thought and History	S. Clarke
RS *712	Topics in the Study of Chinese Buddhist Texts I: Translated Texts	J. Benn
RS *713	Topics in the Study of Chinese Buddhist Texts II: Indigenous Chinese Writings	J. Benn
RS *714	Topics in Indian Buddhist Texts	S. Clarke
RS *715	Readings in Indian Buddhist Texts	S. Clarke
RS *716	Topics in Japanese Buddhism	S. Clarke, M. Rowe
RS *717	Readings in Japanese Buddhist Texts	S. Clarke, M. Rowe
RS *718	Topics in Buddhist Studies: Recent Scholarship	J. Benn, S. Clarke, M. Rowe
RS *719	Topics in Modern and Contemporary Buddhism	M. Rowe

EAST ASIAN RELIGIONS

RS *721	Topics in East Asian Religions	J. Benn, S. Clarke, M. Rowe
RS *722	Topics in Japanese Religions	S. Clarke, M. Rowe
RS *723	Readings in Japanese Religions	S. Clarke, M. Rowe
RS *724	Topics in Taoism	J. Benn
RS *725	Readings in Taoist Texts	J. Benn
RS *726	Topics in Chinese Religions	J. Benn
RS *727	Readings in Chinese Religions	J. Benn
RS *728	Readings in Academic Japanese	S. Clarke, M. Rowe

BIBLICAL STUDIES

GENERAL COURSES

RS *730	Topics in the Relationship of Judaism and Christianity	Staff
RS *731	Topics in the Biblical Tradition	Staff
RS *732	Topics in the Theory of Interpretation	Staff
RS *733	Topics in Social History and Material Culture	Staff
RS *734	Special Readings in the Biblical Tradition	Staff

EARLY JUDAISM

RS *737	Readings in Hebrew I	D. Machiela
RS *738	Readings in Hebrew II	D. Machiela
RS *739	Readings in Aramaic Texts: Biblical Aramaic and Dead Sea Scrolls	D. Machiela
RS *740	Readings in Aramaic Texts: Targum and Talmud	D. Machiela
RS *741	Readings in Greek Jewish Literature	Staff
RS *742	Topics in the Dead Sea Scrolls	E. Schuller
RS *743	Topics in Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha	E. Schuller, D. Machiela
RS *744	Topics in Rabbinic Judaism	D. Machiela
RS *745	Topics in Philo and Hellenistic Judaism	Staff
RS *746	Topics in Early Jewish History	E. Schuller, D. Machiela
RS *747	Topics in Early Jewish Literature	E. Schuller, D. Machiela

EARLY CHRISTIANITY

RS *751	Readings in Gospel Literature I	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *752	Readings in Gospel Literature II	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *753	Readings in Early Christian Epistolography I	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *754	Readings in Early Christian Epistolography II	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *755	Readings in Early Christian Historiography I	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *756	Readings in Early Christian Historiography II	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *757	Topics in Gospel Literature	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *758	Topics in Early Christian Epistolography	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *759	Topics in Christian Origins	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *760	Topics in Early Christian History	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *761	Topics in Early Christian Literature	S. Westerholm, A. Runesson
RS *762	Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought of Late Antiquity: The Trinity	P. Widdicombe
RS *763	Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought of Late Antiquity: Christology	P. Widdicombe
RS *764	Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought of Late Antiquity: Themes	P. Widdicombe
RS *765	Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought Of Late Antiquity: Major Figures	P. Widdicombe

WESTERN RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

GENERAL COURSES

RS *769 Special Readings in Western Religious Traditions Staff

RELIGION AND POLITICS

RS *770 Topics in Ancient Political Philosophy Z. Planinc
RS *771 Topics in Medieval Political Philosophy Z. Planinc
RS *772 Topics in Modern Political Philosophy Z. Planinc
RS *773 Critics of Modernity
(Same as Pol. Sc. *754) T. Kroeker, Z. Planinc, J. Seaman
RS *774 Topics in Religion and Literature T. Kroeker, Z. Planinc
RS *775 Topics in Political Theology and Ethics T. Kroeker
RS *776 Topics in Technology and Ethics T. Kroeker
RS *777 Topics in Philosophy and Jewish Thought
(Same as CSCT *777) D. Hollander
RS *778 Topics in Modern Jewish Thought
(Same as CSCT *778) D. Hollander
RS *779 Phenomenology and Religious Experience II D. Hollander
RS *792 Topics in Continental Philosophy and Religious
Thought D. Hollander, T. Kroeker

RELIGION AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

RS *709 Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Asian Religions M. Rowe
RS *766 Islamic Fundamentalism
(Same as Globalization 766) L. Takim
RS *767 Islam in a Global World
(Same as Globalization 767) L. Takim
RS *780 Topics in Religion and Society
(Same as Soc. *708) Staff
RS *781 Introduction to the Anthropology of Religion
(Same as Anthro *704) E. Badone
RS *782 Diasporas, Transnationalism and Religious Identities
(Same as Anthro *782 and Glob *782) E. Badone
RS *783 Anthropological Approaches to Catholicism
(Same as Anthro *784) E. Badone
RS *784 Myth and Interpretation of Oral Tradition
(Same as Anthro *785) E. Badone
RS *785 Death: Rituals and Meanings in Cross-Cultural Context
(Same as Anthro *799) E. Badone
RS *786 Ritual and Symbolic Healing
(Same as Anthro *796) E. Badone, C. Rothenberg
RS *787 Topics in Belief and the Body C. Rothenberg
RS *788 Topics in Anthropological Approaches to Islam
(Same as Anthro *788) C. Rothenberg
RS *789 Topics in Gender and Feminist Theory and Religious Studies C. Rothenberg

WESTERN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

RS *762	Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought of Late Antiquity: The Trinity	P. Widdicombe
RS *763	Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought of Late Antiquity: Christology	P. Widdicombe
RS *764	Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought of Late Antiquity: Themes	P. Widdicombe
RS *765	Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought Of Late Antiquity: Major Figures	P. Widdicombe
RS *766	Islamic Fundamentalism (Same as Globalization 766)	L. Takim
RS *767	Islam in a Global World (Same as Globalization 767)	L. Takim
RS *774	Topics in Religion and Literature	T. Kroeker, Z. Planinc
RS *775	Topics in Political Theology and Ethics	T. Kroeker
RS *777	Topics in Philosophy and Jewish Thought (Same as CSCT *777)	D. Hollander
RS *778	Topics in Modern Jewish Thought (Same as CSCT *778)	D. Hollander
RS *779	Phenomenology and Religious Experience II	D. Hollander
RS *790	Topics in Western Religious Thought	Staff
RS *791	Topics in Philosophical Theology	T. Kroeker
RS *792	Topics in Continental Philosophy and Religious Thought	D. Hollander, T. Kroeker
RS *793	Topics in Religious Ethics	T. Kroeker
RS *794	Topics in Augustine and Augustinians	T. Kroeker, P. Widdicombe
RS *795	Topics in Modern Christian Thought: Themes	P. Widdicombe
RS *796	Topics in Modern Christian Thought: Theologians	P. Widdicombe
RS *797	Topics in German Judaism	D. Hollander
RS *798	Phenomenology and Religious Experience I: Introduction to Phenomenology	D. Hollander

SPECIAL COURSES

RS *600	Studies in Religion	Staff
RS *700	Topics in Religious Studies	Staff
RS *701	Issues in the Study of Religions	Staff
RS *768	Religion and Globalization (Same as Globalization *707 and Sociology *707)	Staff
RS *782	Diasporas, Transnationalism and Religious Identities (Same as Anthro *782 and Glob *782)	E. Badone

GRADUATE COURSES
2011-2012
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES **June 16, 2011**

Departmental

RS 701 / Issues in the Study of Religion
Term 1

Planinc

This departmental seminar is required of all incoming students. It offers a forum for the discussion of issues central to the field of Religious Studies and for the exploration of a variety of approaches to investigating religious traditions, texts, institutions, ideas, experiences and practices. Since Religious Studies might best be considered a field rather than a discipline, its theories, methods and issues can be extremely diverse. In the seminar we will consider the following questions from a variety of perspectives: What do we think we are studying when we study religions? Why do we think this is a worthwhile endeavour? How do we study religions? As in all seminars, we study not only the topics discussed in the assigned readings, but also the readings themselves, how they were written, why certain perspectives and materials were chosen, and so on.

Asian Religions

RS 6X06/Sanskrit 3A06 / Introductory Sanskrit
Terms 1 and 2

LaRose

This course is designed to provide students with all the basic tools required for the study of classical Sanskrit.

RS 6Y06 / Introduction to Literary Chinese
Terms 1 and 2

Benn

This course is designed to introduce students to the vocabulary, structure and patterns of primary sources in East Asian religions composed in literary Chinese. Students will be introduced to the use of general and specialised dictionaries for the study of Buddhist and Taoist materials, as well as resources such as indices, concordances and electronic databases.

Students will prepare the text for each class, and we will discuss grammatical and vocabulary issues as they arise. We will read a variety of texts (scripture, commentary, biography, inscriptional etc.) including unpunctuated pre-modern editions. The choice of materials will be determined by student interests.

Prerequisite: at least two years of modern Chinese and/or instructor consent.

Books: none required. Dictionaries and other aids will be recommended for purchase.

Buddhism

RS 711 / Topics in Buddhist Thought and History: The Indian Buddhist Monastery Term 1

Clarke

This seminar will explore the Indian Buddhist monastery through archaeological, art-historical, epigraphical, literary, and textual sources. In addition to a research essay, students may be required to submit short (1-2 page), critical response papers on a regular basis, and occasional assignments relating to the use of specialised research tools.

RS 712 / Topics in the Study of Chinese Buddhist Texts I: Translated Texts Term 1

Benn

The subject of our seminar this term will be the *Lotus Sutra* (*Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, 妙法蓮華經). We shall begin by exploring the content and structure of the scripture with especial attention to the translation into Chinese by Kumārajīva (Jiumoluoshi 鳩摩羅什, 344-413 or 350-409). In addition to a close reading of the scripture we shall discuss the influence of its ideas on the practice and doctrine of East Asian religions from medieval times (e.g., Tiantai/Tendai 天台, devotional practices, self-immolation) to the present (e.g., Japanese New Religions). We shall also consider artistic representations of the *Lotus Sutra*, especially those from Dunhuang. Students will be introduced to the use of specialised research tools for the study of East Asian religions such as dictionaries, concordances, indices and databases.

RS 715 / Readings in Indian Buddhist Texts Terms 1 and 2

Clarke

This course is designed to provide an introduction to reading the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya. Completion of first-year Sanskrit is required.

RS 718 / Topics in Buddhist Studies: Recent Scholarship: The Mahāyāna Term 1

Clarke

This seminar will explore various issues in the study of Mahāyāna Buddhism, with particular reference to discussions of the origins of this movement in early India. Students will be introduced to a wide range of research tools and approaches (including archaeological, art-historical, epigraphical, literary, and textual/philological) in the study of Indian Buddhism. In addition to a research essay, students may be required to submit short (1-2 page), critical response papers on a regular basis, and occasional assignments relating to the use of specialised research tools.

East Asian Religions

RS 726 / Topics in Chinese Religions: Recent Scholarship in Chinese Religions

Term 2

Benn

In this seminar we shall read and discuss major studies of topics in Chinese Religions produced in English over the last ten years or so. In addition we shall survey trends in recent scholarship produced in other languages (Chinese, Japanese, French, German, etc.). Students will be required to write regular, short (1-2 page), critical responses in addition to a longer essay on the state of the field.

Biblical Field

General Courses

RS 730 / Topics in the Relationship of Judaism and Christianity: Jewish/Christian Relations in Antiquity

Term 2

Runesson

This seminar will address the problem of the nature and extent of Jewish / Christian relations in antiquity, understood within the context of Graeco-Roman society. Recent developments in the scholarly discussion have made obsolete older paradigms in which contacts between “Judaism” and “Christianity” are constructed antithetically and then generalised. If we adopt a critical attitude to the universalising language applied by much scholarship (and some sources), the diversity within and between Jewish and (Jewish and non-Jewish) Christ-believing communities demands that we take seriously the local-specific nature and range of the source material. The seminar will focus on aspects of rivalry, competition, and co-existence; the sometimes conflicting literary, archaeological, and inscriptional evidence of interaction will be assessed within an interpretive frame informed by perspectives from the social sciences.

Early Judaism

RS 742 / Topics in the Dead Sea Scrolls

Term 2

Schuller

The course will introduce students to the whole range of texts found in the Dead Sea Scrolls, with particular emphasis on key issues in current scholarly discussion and the contributions of the Scrolls toward our understanding of Second Temple Judaism and the beginnings of Christianity. There will be extensive reading of selected texts, both in translation and in Hebrew (for students with advanced standing in Hebrew; Hebrew, however, is not required for this seminar).

RS 744 / Topics in Rabbinic Judaism: Early Rabbinic Parables
Term 1

Machiela

Parables were one of the most popular teaching forms of the early rabbis, as preserved in rabbinic literature (and the New Testament), and will comprise the central focus of this seminar. We will use the parable form as a starting point for exploring a spectrum of rabbinic texts and figures up to the fifth century CE, and also for the considerable secondary literature on rabbinic parables and related issues. Ultimately, the seminar is intended to be an induction into the world of ancient rabbinic literature, thought, and life – an utterly fascinating world unlike any other. A Hebrew component will accompany the seminar for those seeking to fill their Hebrew requirement, or otherwise interested.

Early Christianity

RS 757 / Topics in Gospel Literature: The Gospel of Matthew and the Matthean Communities
Term 1

Runesson

The Gospel of Matthew was circulated more widely among early Christ-believers than any of the other gospels. It was used by Christ-believing Jews who maintained a Jewish identity, as well as by non-Jews who rejected all variations of Judaism, Christ-centred or otherwise. This seminar is devoted to the study of the gospel text, the religion expressed in it, and socio-religious aspects of the communities in which it was written and transmitted. Covering the major areas of contemporary Matthean studies, we shall combine extensive treatment of the secondary literature with close readings of selected passages illustrating problems and possible solutions to some of the riddles of this multifaceted Jewish text from the late first century.

RS 763 / Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought of Late Antiquity: The Reading of Scripture: Genesis in the Eyes of Augustine and Chrysostom
Term 2

Widdicombe

In this seminar, we shall look at the development in Augustine's thinking about the interpretation of Scripture through a reading of his three works on Genesis, *On Genesis: A Refutation of the Manichees*, *Unfinished Literal Commentary on Genesis*, and *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*. We shall contrast Augustine's reading with that of the Antiochene, John Chrysostom. We shall also examine Augustine's application of his hermeneutical principles to the genre of the gospel in his *Homilies on the Gospel of John*.

Western Field

Religion and Politics

RS 770 / Topics in Ancient Political Philosophy
Term 2

Planinc

"This seminar will discuss the account of philosophy, politics and religion given in Plato's *Symposium, Theaetetus, and Phaedo*."

RS 792 / Topics in Continental Philosophy and Religious Thought: "Forgiveness - Atonement - Reconciliation"

(Can be taken for credit in Religion and Politics as well as in Western Religious Thought)

Term 2

Hollander

We will look at critical analyses of the themes of forgiveness, atonement, and reconciliation (which often also involve the themes of retribution and sacrifice) in works by Hermann Cohen, Vladimir Jankélévitch, Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, and others. We may also look at theoretical reflections on related legal notions such as "transitional justice."

Suggestions from students for works it would make sense to study in the framework of this seminar are welcome – please e-mail me, danahol@mcmaster.ca

Syllabus and updates to be posted to my homepage, <http://univmail.mcmaster.ca/~danahol/>

Religion and the Social Sciences

RS 781 / Introduction to the Anthropology of Religion

(Same as Anthropology 704)

Term 2

Rothenberg

This course introduces the study of religion from the standpoint of anthropology. Course materials provide a historical overview of theoretical developments in this field. Current ethnographies focusing on religion will be covered, and students will receive an introduction to ethnographic methodology.

RS 785 / Death: Rituals and Meanings in Cross-Cultural Context (same as Anthro 799)

(Same as Anthro 799)

Term 1

Badone

This course surveys cultural constructions of death, dying and bereavement in a variety of social contexts. The significance ascribed to death through funerary rituals and afterlife beliefs will also be addressed. Drawing upon theoretical perspectives from anthropology, sociology and religious studies, the course considers death as a social process, a rite of passage, and an occasion for the creation and/or contestation of social and individual meanings.

Western Religious Thought

RS 763 / Topics in the Christian Literature and Thought of Late Antiquity: The Reading of Scripture: Genesis in the Eyes of Augustine and Chrysostom

Term 2

Widdicombe

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