

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education



Academic Policies and Procedures Handbook for the Ph.D. Program in Religious Education

2018

INTRODUCTION

The Guidebook sets forth the academic policies and procedures of the doctoral program in religious education at the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education.

The policies and procedures contained herein are subject to change at any time, and revisions will apply to all students, both continuing and new students, unless otherwise stated. This Guidebook is intended for widespread distribution and will be reprinted periodically. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each student to obtain and review a copy of the most recent publication. Current policies and procedures may also be reviewed on the GRE website at <http://www.fordham.edu/gre>.

A. ACADEMIC AUTHORITY

The continuance of each student upon the rolls of the University, the receipt of academic credits, and graduation and the conferring of any degree or granting of any certificate are strictly subject to the powers and authority of the University, which are vested in the President and his designee(s). The operative norms and procedures expected to be followed by all students are those described in the University Code of Conduct approved by Fordham University and published in the Student Handbook issued by the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The decision-making authority of the Dean is exercised in three primary ways: (1) admission of qualified candidates; (2) withholding student's records and transcripts; and (3) disenrolling students from the program and School.

For most matters and unless otherwise stated, the Dean has delegated this authority to the faculty members of the Religious Education Area to implement the policies and procedures stated in this guidebook.

B. STUDENT RECORDS

A copy of the University's policy and guidelines regarding student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is available from Enrollment Services.

Change of Name and/ or Address

Correspondence from the University is sent to the address from the student's file in Enrollment Services. It is the student's responsibility to notify the University of any change of address. Likewise, it is the student's responsibility to notify the University of any change in the student's name. Notification of the University in the event of either a change of name or address must be done in a timely manner by changing the appropriate information in my.fordham through the Banner self service link on the student tab.

Transcripts of Records

An official transcript is one bearing the University's seal. Official transcripts of academic records are not given to students or graduates but are mailed directly to the college, professional or graduate school, government agency or business concern they designate. An unofficial transcript is one given to the person whose credits are listed thereon and marked "Unofficial." The University accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of an unofficial transcript after it has been issued.

Transcripts may be requested from Enrollment Services in person, online, or by mail. They should be requested well in advance of the date desired. No transcript or certification will be issued for students who have unpaid financial obligations owing to the University. A fee is charged for each transcript, payable at the time of request.

Students desiring to have their transcripts airmailed abroad should inquire about additional postage charges.

Fordham University will not assume responsibility for transcripts that are delayed because they have not been requested in time. All inquires concerning the issuance of transcripts must be made within six months of the original request.

C. ADMISSIONS ISSUES

Matriculation

Matriculated students are those accepted for and actively working toward the Ph.D. degree offered by the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education.

Acceptance as a matriculated student in the Ph.D. program of the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education is incompatible with matriculation in the degree programs of any other graduate or professional school except in those instances where a formal joint degree program has been established.

Students who are in the process of completing a degree (whether at Fordham or another institution) at the time of their acceptance into a graduate program must submit an official transcript indicating that the degree was awarded. This should be done before registering for the first-time in the graduate program. If the transcript is not received by the second week of classes of the first semester, a hold will be placed on the student's registration and records.

Deferral of Admission

A deferral in the semester of matriculation or requires the recommendation of the Religious Education Area and the approval of the Assistant Dean for Admission.

Withdrawal

Students in good standing may voluntarily withdraw from the program by sending a written request to the assistant academic dean and completing the forms sent to the student. Once they have withdrawn, they must apply for readmission.

Readmission

If a student is disenrolled for failure to maintain an adequate grade point average(3.5 Cumulative GPA) or failure to make satisfactory academic progress, he or she may not reapply. For additional information see the sections on Academic Performance and Satisfactory Academic Performance and Progress below.

A student who is disenrolled for any other reason or who has withdrawn voluntarily may reapply. This is done through the Director of Religious Education and must receive the

written approval of the Dean. The readmission application should meet the *current* program requirements.

D. GRADING, ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

ACADEMIC POLICIES

A. Grades

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Equivalent</u>
A	4.0: Excellent. Honors-level work
A-	3.7: Still excellent
B+	3.3: Very good. High level of performance
B	3.0: Good, solid and above average performance
B-	2.7: Good. Still above average
C+	2.3: Average level of performance
C	2.0: Satisfactory, acceptable performance
C-	1.7: Minimally acceptable
F	0.0: Failure. Inferior performance
P	0.0: Pass. Valid for use in course categories: Dissertation Mentoring, Dissertation Direction, Clinical Pastoral Education, Field Placement and Research Methods.

B. Procedure Regarding Incompletes

If there is a serious reason for taking a grade of "I" - "incomplete", students must apply to the professor no later than the last class meeting using the Request for Grade of Incomplete form. It is the Professor's decision to grant or reject the request. This form is available in the Dean's office and must be signed by the Professor and the Dean. The Professor takes the responsibility with the student for the necessary make-up work and final grading. Incomplete grades not resolved by the deadline on the calendar will automatically become an "F".

After the make-up work and final grading has been done, the formal Change of Grade request should be completed and signed by the Professor and the Dean. This form must be in the Dean's office by the very latest the day before the closeout date on the School's calendar. As with all catalogued information, students are held responsible to adhere to those dates.

With the publication of this set of procedures, the entire responsibility regarding removal of an "incomplete" rests upon the student and faculty member. This is a serious matter, since upon failure of a student to take the proper action all credit for a course is thereby lost by a certain date, and a failing grade will thenceforward mar one's record.

C. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense, and can be defined as "literary theft" when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. One who **intentionally** plagiarizes the work of another in a course paper, project, or examination can expect to receive a

failing grade for the assignment and potentially for the course. The decision will be made by the professor in consultation with the dean and/or assistant dean, and will be recorded in the student's file. Student's who commit a second act of plagiarism while at GRE may be dismissed from the school. One who **unintentionally** misrepresents borrowed material as one's own original work, either resulting from carelessness and/or ignorance, will have his or her assignment returned with the opportunity to rewrite it in an acceptable form. The following guidelines apply to all written work:

- 1) Using the ideas, thoughts, words, and statements of another, including those quoted from the Internet, without crediting the source constitutes plagiarism.
- 2) If exact words of another are used, they must be put in quotation marks or indented, and acknowledged through footnotes, endnotes, and/or bibliography.
- 3) If the thoughts or ideas, rather than the exact words of another are used, they must be acknowledged through footnotes, endnotes, and/or bibliography.
- 4) If source material is paraphrased or rephrased, it must be acknowledged through a footnote or endnote. If the paraphrased material includes exact words, phrases, and sentences, they must be put in quotation marks.
- 5) The underlying criterion for determining plagiarism is claiming as one's own original work the ideas, thoughts, words, and statements of another without crediting the source.

D. Academic Probation

All GRE students matriculated in a Certificate or Master's Degree program must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 to continue in their program of study. Student's who fall below a 3.0 cumulative GPA will be placed on probation and will not be allowed to receive financial aid from the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education. Students whose cumulative GPA remains below a 3.0 for a second consecutive semester will be dismissed from the GRE.

E. Appeal of Academic Grades

A student who believes that he/she has received an incorrect grade for a final paper, course, major paper, project, qualifying paper, or dissertation may appeal the grade in accordance with the procedures below.

The student will first discuss the grade or failure of a faculty member to sign approval of paper or dissertation, and try to resolve the issue informally. Should that not be satisfactory, the following procedures are to be followed.

1. Within one month of receiving the grade, the student must request in writing a review of the material and grade by the faculty member who assigned it. In the case of a grade assigned by a committee, the student must make this request to the chairperson of the

committee, or if there is none, to program director. As a result of the student's request, the material in question will be reviewed by the person(s) who assigned the grade, and the result of the review will accord with the academic judgment of the faculty member/chair person/ program director.

2. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the initial review, he/she may request a second review. This request must be made in writing to the Assistant Academic Dean within one week of receiving the results of the initial review. The Assistant Academic Dean will institute the second review and should report the results to the student within two months of the request. The method for conducting the review will be at the discretion of the Assistant Academic Dean. If the Assistant Academic Dean concurs with the student's appeal, he/she will consult the Dean and any appropriate department faculty in determining the grade to be awarded.

3. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the second review, he/she may request a final review. This request must be made in writing to the Dean of GRE within one week of the receipt of the result of the second review. The Dean will institute the final review and should report the results to the student within one month. The method for conducting the review will be at the Dean's discretion. If the Dean concurs with the student's appeal, he/she will consult appropriate department faculty in determining the grade to be awarded. No further reviews may be requested by the student. At the Dean's discretion, the appeal may be submitted to the Academic Vice President for review.

Note: Time requirements in the procedure refer to time when classes are in session during the academic year and may be adjusted accordingly for summer, holiday, or vacation periods.

F. Grievance Policy

I. GRIEVANCE POLICY

Fordham University protects the right of each student to be free from discrimination on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, handicap or national origin. The Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education employs the following Grievance Procedure covering all matriculated and non-matriculated students. Students who believe they have been discriminated against with respect to participation in access to, or benefits of any program or activity within the school are requested to use the following Grievance Procedure.

A. Informal Procedure

Since a formal grievance procedure is a last resort, it is assumed that every effort to resolve the grievance through informal approaches has been conducted by the concerned parties. Nevertheless, the use of informal procedures is not a prerequisite for the submission of the grievance through the formal procedure.

B. Formal Procedure

Step I: School-Wide

- A. An alleged grievance must be brought in writing to the attention of the Dean within twenty-five (25) school calendar days from the time of the incident.
- B. The Dean will convene the standing committee which will conduct the review and which must receive a full written statement of the grievance and pertinent substantiating information from both the aggrieved and the person charged at least five days prior to the review date. All review procedures will be restricted to the parties involved. It is expected that this process will take place within fifteen (15) school calendar days after the student submits a written statement to the Dean.

This standing committee is to be composed of two faculty members selected by the faculty for staggered terms of 2 years and one student selected by the student association for a 1 year term. Should one of the standing committee members be the person charged, the Dean shall appoint an alternate.

- C. The parties will be given an opportunity to attend the meetings and to present information to the committee.
- D. The standing committee will render a written statement of the findings together with recommendations for appropriate remedies to the dean within five (5) school calendar days after the review.
- E. The Dean will meet with the concerned parties within ten (10) school calendar days to present recommendations for resolution of the grievance to the concerned parties.
- F. Should the Dean be the person charged, an alleged grievance must be brought in writing to the Assistant Chairperson within twenty-five (25) calendar days. The Associate Dean will convene the standing committee, receive its report, and communicate recommendations for resolution of the grievance to the concerned parties within the same time limits as specified above.

Step II: University-Wide

- A. If either the aggrieved or the individual(s) school against whom charges have been brought feel that the matter has not been resolved, either party may appeal in writing to the appropriate Area Vice President within ten (10) school calendar days after the meeting between the Dean and the concerned parties in Step I. The appeal should include 1) a concise summary of the charge(s), and 2) an explanation of why the school-wide process was considered unsatisfactory.
- B. The Vice-President will review the grievance process to determine whether proper procedures were followed, or if new evidence not available in Step I is being presented. If the Vice President is not satisfied with the handling of the

grievance investigation, he/she will return the grievance to the Dean for further investigation. The concerned parties will be notified of the Vice President's actions and decisions within twenty (20) school calendar days of the receipt of the appeal.

- C. The Vice President for Academic Affairs is the last court of appeal, and his/her decision will be final.

Continuous Enrollment

The Ph.D. program in religious education has a continuous enrollment policy. This means that graduate students matriculated in the Ph.D. program must register every Fall and Spring semester until graduation. Students are considered registered when enrolled for course work or dissertation mentoring. The only exception to this policy is the case of an approved leave or absence.

Leave of Absence

Students who encounter circumstances that prevent their continuous enrollment may request a leave of absence through the Assistant Academic Dean. A leave of absence is normally granted only for extraordinary personal reasons outside the student's control that prevent involvement in graduate studies (e.g., serious, documentable medical problems). The request for a leave should specify the reason for the leave and the time period involved. The Religious Education Area will forward the request and its recommendation to the Dean who will grant, deny, or modify the recommendation. The approved student will be administratively registered for Leave of Absence.

Students who are on academic probation may not be granted an unconditional leave of absence. Any leave will be conditional upon their correcting their academic difficulties in the semester upon their return.

Time on a leave of absence counts towards the time limit for completion of a degree. A leave of absence will normally not exceed one academic year. Leaves will not be granted to students whose time limits expire during the period of the leave.

Failure To Register

Matriculated students who are neither registered nor on approved leave of absence for two continuous semesters are *automatically* dropped from the rolls of the GRE. If they desire to continue their education at Fordham, they must apply for readmission through the Assistant Academic Dean and receive the approval of the Religious Education Area. Such readmission is not automatic.

Registration Changes

Adding and dropping courses or changing from audit to credit is permitted only up to the last day for late registration.

Withdrawal after the last date of late registration on the academic calendar requires the Assistant Academic Dean's approval and will appear on the student's record as a "W" for the course. *Students who withdraw from courses are still liable for tuition and fees as determined by the Fordham Financial Aid website.*

A student registered for a course for credit may change his/her status to audit with the approval of the Director of Religious Education up to the last day of late registration. After this date, a student may only do so with the Assistant Academic Dean's permission.

Add-Drop Procedure

All changes to a student's schedule must be made in a timely way in keeping with the academic calendar. Students are required to make all such changes themselves on my.fordham.edu before deadlines. After registration changes are closed online requests should be made in an E-mail to the Assistant Academic Dean, including your name, Fordham ID number, the request, and the CRN numbers of courses to be added, dropped or changed. All changes must be requested in writing or by email.

Refunds

The refund of tuition and fees payments or the cancellation of charges incurred for tuition, fees or housing are based on schedules that are issued by Enrollment Services. They are based on University Policy and are not within the purview of any department, program or the Dean's Office. The amount refunded or canceled is normally based on the date of withdrawal.

A request for refund or cancellation of charges for tuition other than that listed in the schedule will be considered only if the actual date of the withdrawal is different from that which is indicated on University records. Such a change will be made only for extraordinary reasons. If a student wishes to request such a change, the request must be submitted in writing to the Dean's Office and fully detailed. Supporting documentation to justify the change must be submitted with the request.

Special Registration

Regularly scheduled GRE courses will constitute the bulk of course-work for doctoral students. Other options for registration include courses offered at other Fordham graduate schools, courses at other schools within the New York Doctoral Consortium, and audits.

Intercampus Registration

Students who wish to register for courses that are offered in another Fordham Graduate School must first obtain the written permission of their advisor and the Assistant Academic Dean. After such permission is obtained, students must obtain permission from the other school's Dean.

Registration At Other Universities

Students who wish to register for courses at other universities must be matriculated in the doctoral program. Only one course at another university may be taken each semester after consultation with the student's advisor and the approval of the Dean. Registration for such courses follows the procedures and fee schedules of the host university. Upon completion of the course, students will request a transfer of the credits to their Fordham permanent record. A grade of B+ or better is required for transfer courses. Students attending other universities are responsible for any differential tuition, fees and deadlines of the other University. Students are responsible to make sure official final grade transcripts from other universities are sent to the Assistant Academic Dean within 6 weeks of the completion of such courses.

Waiver / Course Substitution Policy

When seeking a substitution or waiver from a required course, students should meet with their faculty advisor to discuss the request. Afterwards, students can complete the waiver process [here](#).

The waiver form must be filled out completely and then given, by the student, to your faculty advisor. Please allow 8 weeks for a decision as the process must move through committees that meet monthly. Please submit the syllabus for any non-GRE course you are seeking a waiver, substitution or transfer credit for with this document. If the request involves a course not previously submitted to GRE, please also have an official transcript for same sent to us at the time of this request. This form must be submitted at least one semester before graduation (for example, by October 1st, 2018 for a May 2019 graduate, etc.). Requests will not normally be reviewed until at least 6 credits have been successfully completed in your current program at GRE.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

- Satisfactory academic progress is defined as completing at least one of the requirements each semester after the semester in which course work is completed. Requirements include the qualifying paper, dissertation proposal, chapters of the dissertation, and the dissertation defense.

- Unsatisfactory progress may include an excessive number of withdrawals, incompletes, leaves of absence, or other delays in meeting the requirements for the degree.
- Students who do not complete one requirement each semester are on academic probation.
 - These students have the next semester to complete the requirement and to file a mandatory timetable for completing all remaining requirements.
 - The timetable must include at least one deadline per semester (e.g., “complete Chapter 1 to 3 of the dissertation in Fall ___ semester”).
 - If the requirement is unmet by the end of the semester, or if the timetable deadlines are missed, the dean, in consultation with the Religious Education Area, will make a decision about whether or not to disenroll the student from the PhD program.
- Doctoral students who have not secured approval of their dissertation proposal five semesters before the expiration of their time limit are on academic probation.
 - Such students have one semester to secure approval of the dissertation proposal and a timetable for completion of the dissertation.
 - If they do not secure approval of the proposal and the timetable, the Dean, in consultation with the Religious Education Area, will make a decision about disenrollment from the PhD program.

- Please note that an individual student's requirements for academic progress may be affected by the time remaining until the student reaches the time limit for degree completion.
- Notwithstanding their academic performance or the time remaining for completion of degree requirements, students who do not make satisfactory progress toward the degree may be disenrolled from the program.
- The Dean reserves the right to review doctoral students' work and to decide to disenroll those who are not making satisfactory academic progress.

F. TIME LIMIT ON COMPLETION OF DEGREE

Students should be aware that they are expected to complete the requirements for their degree, including thesis or dissertation work, in a timely and expeditious fashion. The timing of the degree indicates the currency of the student's knowledge and training. The number of years to degree is monitored by the New York State Department of Education and other institutions concerned with graduate programs, and is often one indicator of the quality of a graduate program. Thus, the policies regarding time limit for completion of degrees have a serious and important academic purpose and are rigorously enforced.

All requirements, including the successful defense and presentation of the dissertation for the Ph.D. must be completed within six years of the first semester of study in the Graduate School. Students who are direct doctoral students and receive a Master's in curso from Fordham, or students who complete a Master's degree and then continue directly into the doctoral program must complete all requirements within ten years of the first semester of study in the Graduate School. These time limits apply to all students regardless of full-time or part-time status.

All students are expected to follow these handbook policies and their academic progress regularly. Students are required to review their status on my.fordham.edu and DegreeWorks each semester to assure that:

1. All courses taken appear properly and were graded properly.
2. All degree requirements have been met.

3. To assure they have submitted any external transcripts or grades in a timely way for inclusion on their Fordham transcript.

Before the conclusion of their final academic year, the student may apply for an extension to the time limit. The request should be made at least 3 months before the time limit expires. Students should be aware that an initial or a further extension to the time limit for degree will be granted only if, in the Dean's judgment, there is sufficient evidence that the degree will be completed expeditiously and that the dissertation will be one of high merit. Additional extensions beyond the time limit will not be granted.

A written request for an extension must be directed through the Director of Religious Education to the Dean for the Dean's approval and must also be approved in writing by the mentor and the readers. As part of the request a student must present the following items:

1. A sufficient portion of the dissertation to permit an objective evaluation of the quality of the work.
2. A timetable for completion of the remaining portions of the dissertation.

Students may petition to have one or more of these requirements adapted to their particular situation. The Religious Education area has the right to review any course taken more than five years ago and require that the student demonstrate currency of knowledge in that area. If the extension is approved, students must meet any other conditions imposed by the Dean and must maintain continuous enrollment until all requirements are completed. Failure to adhere to the approved timetable or to meet other conditions may result in disenrollment.

Non-enrolled Students

Students who are currently not enrolled, but who will exceed or have exceeded the time limit must apply for readmission. As part of this application, they must present a timetable for completion of all *current* degree requirements, as well as re-taking of expired courses, and resubmission of the dissertation proposal. If permission to resume studies is granted, failure to adhere to this timetable could result in disenrollment.

G. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Students who do not meet the minimal standards for academic performance are on academic probation. Minimal satisfactory academic performance is defined as having a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.50 (B+ average). Any student receiving any University financial aid must maintain a 3.5 cumulative GPA as a minimal requirement

for continuation of the aid. Administrative “Fs” are computed as “Fs” (0.00) for the purpose of determining the grade point average.

Students who are below the required grade point average may not submit qualifying papers without the Dean’s permission.

H. ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Satisfactory academic progress is defined as completing at least one of the requirements each year after the semester in which course work is completed. Requirements include the qualifying paper, dissertation proposal, parts of the dissertation, and the dissertation defense. Notwithstanding their academic performance or the time remaining for completion of degree requirements, students who do not make satisfactory progress toward the degree may be dropped from the rolls. Unsatisfactory progress may include an excessive number of withdrawals, incompletes, leaves of absence, or other delays in meeting the requirements for the degree.

Students who do not complete one requirement each year are on academic probation. Such students have the next semester to complete the requirement and to file a mandatory timetable for completing all remaining requirements. The timetable must include at least one deadline per semester (e.g., “complete Chapter 1 to 3 of the dissertation in Fall ___ semester”). If the requirement is unmet by the end of the semester, or if the timetable deadlines are missed, the dean, in consultation with the Religious Education Area, will make a decision about dismissal.

In addition, doctoral students who have not secured approval of their dissertation proposal five semesters before the expiration of their time limit are on academic probation. Such students have one semester to secure approval of the dissertation proposal and a timetable for completion of the dissertation. If they do not secure approval of the proposal and the timetable, the Dean, in consultation with the Religious Education Area, will make a decision about dismissal.

Please note that an individual student’s requirements for academic progress may be affected by the time remaining until the student reaches the time limit for degree completion.

I. ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT PROCEDURE AND SEQUENCE

1. Upon acceptance each student is assigned on academic advisor. The advisor is to be consulted at each registration period.
2. Each student is required to take a minimum of 6 credits per semester.
3. Advanced Standing will be determined at or shortly after admission to the Ph.D. in Religion Education program. Advanced Standing credits will be added to a student’s academic record after the student completes 12 credits as a GRE Ph.D. student if the

student is in good academic standing and has no incomplete grades. See below under Advanced Standing for additional information.

4. Requests for independent study courses and substitutions to required courses must be approved by a majority of the religious education faculty and the dean. See Independent Study Courses and Substitutions to Required Courses below for additional information.
5. Students are required to fulfill coursework requirements prior to taking the Dissertation Mentoring Seminar.
6. All students who have completed course work are required to enroll in the Dissertation Mentoring Seminar each semester until they defend their dissertation. Credits earned from taking the Dissertation Mentoring Seminar do not count toward the 72 credits needed to complete course work for the Ph.D. degree.
7. Once the student has chosen a dissertation mentor, academic advisement is rendered by the mentor.

J. ADVANCED STANDING

Advanced Standing can be applied to meet Religious Education Core course requirements, Religious Education Elective course requirements, and Religious Studies course requirements.

All courses accepted for Advanced Standing credit must meet the following criteria:

- (1) The student must have received a grade of B+ or better.
- (2) The courses were completed within the ten year period prior to admission to the Ph.D. in Religious Education Program.

Courses accepted for Advanced Standing credit in the Religious Education Electives area are limited to:

- (1) Courses taught by a religious educator from a religious educational perspective.
- (2) Foundational courses on human development. Such courses are accepted because an understanding of human growth and development has been regarded as being foundational for religious education since the founding of religious education as an academic discipline.
- (3) Courses that explore some aspect of social development from a religious educational perspective.
- (4) Courses taught in one of the areas of the academic discipline of education that have relevance for religious education.
- (5) Courses in theology that intersect with religious education or within which there is a clear religious educational dynamic.

The Religious Education Area may need in some instances to determine if courses meet criteria 2, 3, 4, or 5 and are applicable to a specific student's program of study.

A maximum of 24 credits Advanced Standing can be awarded. The Religion Education area, with approval of the Dean, can grant more credits than this and consider other exceptions to the Advanced Standing policy in exceptional circumstances, including cases in which a student has earned a recent MA in Religious Education at the GRE and has already taken many of the required courses for the Ph.D. program.

K. INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSES

Petitions from matriculated Ph.D. students for independent study can be presented in writing to the Religious Education Area when and if they meet the following criteria: (1) a required course is not being offered in the given semester, or (2) the Independent Study will take in the last semester of the program of study.

Petitions must be reviewed and approved by a majority of the Religious Education faculty before they are sent to the Dean for final approval.

L. SUBSTITUTIONS TO REQUIRED COURSES

Petitions from matriculated Ph.D. students for substitutions to required core courses must be presented in writing to the Religious Education Area for review and approval in a timely manner before being sent to the Dean for final approval. These requests should be submitted in the semester before the end of coursework, or before the semester in which the substituted course would be taken.

M. QUALIFYING PAPERS

- The purpose of qualifying papers is to ensure that students develop research skills as soon as possible in their graduate careers.
 - A student's qualifying paper qualifies him or her to move on to the proposal writing phase of doctoral studies.
 - Qualifying papers evaluate a student's ability to produce professional quality work. The papers should give strong evidence that a student is willing and able to produce a publishable paper. This means that the paper could contribute to the ongoing literature on the topic covered. A contribution to the literature can be made, for example, by:

(1) Presenting an argument among several writers and entering the discussion with one's own view.

(2) Tracing historically some concept which is then modified or used to address a contemporary issue.

(3) Providing an illuminating account about a religious educator's arguments or contentions.

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

- Length: Qualifying papers must be 30-45 pages, double spaced.
- Formatting: Qualifying papers are to be typed and double-spaced according to the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Papers should be proofread before submission.
- Schedule: A qualifying paper must be submitted and approved no later than the fifth semester of a student's program of study (excluding summer semesters).
- Evaluation and Approval: Qualifying papers are evaluated by three members of the faculty, and when judged to be acceptable by all three readers are approved.

- Those who fail to meet the qualifying paper requirement will be disenrolled from the program.
- If her or his qualifying paper is approved, the student is required to submit a copy of the qualifying paper with a signed title page to the Coordinator of Religious Education. A copy of the signed title page will be placed in the student's file.
- Approved qualifying papers are posted on the Ph.D. student Blackboard site.
- In all cases, the qualifying paper should be accepted before the student's proposal hearing.
- Qualifying papers cannot be accepted until all grades of Incomplete are satisfied.

Sample Title Page for a Qualifying Paper

THE TITLE OF THE QUALIFYING PAPER IN CAPS ARE ARRANGED IN AN INVERTED PYRAMID USING A MAXIMUM OF EIGHTEEN WORDS

Mary Quincy Smith

QUALIFYING PAPER

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK

2012

SIGNATURES OF APPROVAL

Dr. _____ DATE _____

Dr. _____ DATE _____

Dr. _____ DATE _____

N. DISSERTATIONS

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

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

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

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

Mentor

Each student chooses a mentor for her or his dissertation from among the Religious Education faculty. In consultation with his or her mentor the student selects a minimum of two proposed dissertation readers and develops a proposal for constituting his or her dissertation committee.

Dissertation Committee

Doctoral students in religious education are required to submit to the Religious Education Area a request for the forming of their dissertation committee. The request must include a completed Proposed Members of the Dissertation Committee form (found below) and an attached sheet that includes a dissertation thesis statement, and a brief rationale why each of the members of the committee was selected to serve on the committee. All dissertation committees require approval by majority vote of the Religious Education faculty.

Dissertation Proposal

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

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

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

The proposal could be structured as follows:

- (1) Introduction: description of the problem, issue, or research question to be dealt with, why the student considers it important, what the student has to say that has not been stated by others, and how the student proposes to contribute to the solution or answer.
- (3) Background: why the student chose the problem, issue, or research questions and/or the pastoral, historical, or social context of the problem, issue, or research questions.
- (4) Thesis Statement: may take the form of hypotheses to be tested, questions to be answered, or objectives to be achieved
- (5) Purpose and Significance: topics to be explored in addressing the problem, issue, or research questions, and how the research will contribute to scholarship, especially scholarship in religious education.
- (6) Methodology: how the student proposes to collect and analyze data, what the relevant sources of information are, and how they will be obtained.
- (7) Design / Organization of the Study: tentative chapter titles and summaries of the contents of each chapter.
- (8) Bibliography: a preliminary listing in correct bibliographic form of books and articles relevant to the thesis.

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

Dissertation Proposal Hearing

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

Scheduling Proposal Hearings

A student's dissertation committee must be approved by the Religious Education Area and Dean before her or his dissertation proposal hearing can be scheduled.

Students' proposal hearings can be scheduled no earlier than their final semester of course work.

Proposal hearings are scheduled by mentors in consultation with the Director of Religious Education.

Public announcements of proposal hearings are made at least one week in advance of a hearing.

The mentor in consultation with the Director of Religious Education and the Assistant Academic Dean checks to ensure that all course work requirements have been fulfilled before a proposal hearing is scheduled. Additionally, the proposal hearing may not be conducted until all grades of Incomplete are satisfied, and all financial obligations have been met.

Fordham Institutional Review Board (IRB) Review

All Ph.D. dissertation research involving human subjects (including interviews, focus groups, and surveys) is subject to review and approval by the Fordham Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB strives to ensure that (1) that subjects are not placed at undue risk; and (2) that subjects provide un-coerced, informed consent to participate in a research study. IRB review also helps to protect the validity of the researchers' findings. For current IRB policies, procedures, and submission deadlines, see https://www.fordham.edu/info/24326/institutional_review_board

Students whose research involves human subjects submit their proposals for IRB review after their dissertation proposal hearings and the acceptance of their proposals by their committee.

Schedule for Submission of Materials

Once the dissertation committee has been established and the dissertation proposal is accepted, the student is to work out a schedule for submission of materials in collaboration with the mentor and readers. This is to ensure that the mentor's and readers' availability is clearly agreed upon and that it takes into account faculty research leaves and summer schedules. Ordinarily professors are not expected to be available during the summer months.

Roles and Responsibilities

While developing the proposal and conducting research, the doctoral student is responsible for meeting and working with her/his mentor and committee members on a regular basis.

Dissertation mentors and committee members are responsible for evaluating the readiness of draft versions of dissertations for format review and oral defense. Although this rigorous review will address issues of completeness, content quality, and basic style, mentors are not responsible for copyediting dissertation manuscripts. Spell-checking, copyediting, formatting and the like, are the responsibility of the dissertation's author.

Readers' primary responsibility is to assure the integrity of the dissertation. Readers' areas of expertise and experience enable them to critically follow the development of the candidate's project from the formation of the research question, through the exploration of related literature and data, through the design of the study, to the analyses of the data, and to the development of conclusions. They provide guidance during the development of the research questions, literature review, design of the study, and selection of methods of analysis. Generally, readers also critically review the chapters of the dissertation as they are prepared and point out areas requiring additional attention.

Style Requirements

To insure consistency of GRE dissertations, students must prepare their dissertations to conform to the guidelines outlined here.

1. **STYLE MANUAL:** *The Chicago Manual of Style (latest edition)*
2. **FORMAT**

TITLE PAGE: See sample in Appendix.

ABSTRACT: The abstract can not exceed 350 words and should be listed on the table of contents without a page number.

VITA: See sample in Appendix. **NOTE:** The vita can not exceed one page and should be listed on the table of contents without a page number.

MARGINS: The top, right, and bottom margins should be 1 inch; the left margin should be 1 ½ inch to allow for binding. Any printing in the margins will count as a mistake. If the margin is exceeded by more than five characters, the dissertation will be rejected.

PAGINATION: Number the first page of any chapter in the center of the page a double space below the last line of text, approximately 5/8 to ¾ inch above the bottom. All other numbers are placed 2 lines (a double space) above the first line of printing and just inside the right margin, that is, approximately 5/8 to ¾ inch from the top and 1 inch from the right side.

FONT: The pitch of the font should be at least 10, with a pitch of 12 preferred. If proportional spacing is used, the average number of characters per inch (cpi) should not exceed 15. No pencil marks are allowed. If special symbols are required, the symbols within a word processing package should be used. If the needed symbols are hand-lettered, black ink must be used. No press-on (transfer) letters are allowed.

PRINT: A laser printer should be used.

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

3. ARRANGEMENT

- I. Title Page
- II. Dedication or Acknowledgements (if used)
- III. Table of Contents
- IV. Preface (if used)
- V. Introduction
- VI. Chapters
- VII. Conclusion
- VIII. Bibliography
- IX. Appendices
- X. Abstract (no pagination)
- XI. Vita (no pagination)

Guidelines for Graduation and Dissertation Defenses

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

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

3. When the dissertation is completed, one copy is given to each committee member for review. The dissertation committee will approve the dissertation when it meets all

substantive standards established by the academic community and the format requirements of the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education.

4. When the committee members have approved the dissertation, each of them will sign an Approval of Written Dissertation form.
5. The Approval of Written Dissertation forms will be collected by the mentor and given to the Director of Religious Education.
6. The Director will notify the Assistant Academic Dean that a Candidate has completed his or her dissertation. The Assistant Academic Dean will then check to make sure that the student's transcript, DegreeWorks Graduation checklist and financial account are up to date.
7. The Candidate will submit one hard copy of the dissertation to the Director and email a pdf of the dissertation to the assistant academic dean. The review cannot begin until the student is registered for dissertation format review and cleared by the assistant academic dean. The Director will submit the hard copy of the dissertation to the Format Review Editor. Format review assures that the document meets all formatting and stylistic requirements of the GRE and is ready for publication. During the format review, every page of the manuscript, including the introductory material and reference section, is reviewed thoroughly. If the review is returned as unacceptable, the student will have to resubmit for, register and pay for, review once again.

When the dissertation is returned from the Format Review Editor, the Director will notify the student by e-mail. The student is responsible to retrieve the dissertation and complete all of the indicated corrections.

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

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

8. The Director will make sure that the Mentor has a Ph.D. Summary Sheet and a GRE Degree Certification Form. The Mentor will complete these forms and submit them to the director. The Director will keep copies of the forms for his or her files and submit copies to the Assistant Academic Dean.

9. The Director and Mentor will work with the Assistant Dean to make sure that the completion of all degree requirements for the candidate is recorded in Degree Works.

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

11. An announcement of the defense (including the time, place, and examiners) will be sent to all faculty and Ph.D. students by the Dean and publicly posted two weeks in advance of the defense.

12. Before the dissertation defense, the Director of Religious Education will provide the Mentor with the dissertation ballots and the materials the candidate will need to complete before presenting his or her dissertation to the Dean.

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

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

14. The dissertation is presented in person to the Dean after the oral defense and final review by the mentor. When the mentor has informed the Assistant academic dean that everything is in order the Dean's staff will schedule the presentation to the Dean. Students are not to contact the Dean's staff directly.

An appointment for the presentation must be made in advance by the date listed in the Academic Calendar. The last date for presentation to the Dean is listed in the Academic Calendar.

After the presentation to the Dean the student must submit the dissertation online to Proquest/UMI using the guide on our website at www.fordham.edu/gre.

Students are encouraged to copyright their dissertations as part of completing the Proquest / UMI forms. The copyright fee is \$55, and it will be charged once the dissertation is submitted electronically. An e-mail will be sent from Proquest to the student once the process is complete.

Candidates should note that the presentation of the dissertation to the Dean and final meeting with the Assistant Academic Dean, not the oral examination, are the last requirement for the degree. Thus, certification of degree completion cannot be done until after these meetings with the Dean and Assistant Dean.

O. DISSERTATION PRESENTATION MATERIALS

1. One copy of the dissertation as a PDF, sent electronically to the Assistant academic dean after your successful defense and final approval of corrections by your committee.
2. The Dean's staff will contact you with a date for presentation to the Dean within two weeks or receiving the electronic, final, PDF.

P. COMMENCEMENT

Students who have completed all degree requirements in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this guidebook are conferred with degrees by the University. Degrees are conferred in February, May, and September on students who have completed their requirements in the Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters, respectively.

Commencement ceremonies are held each May. Students receiving degrees anytime during the preceding academic year are invited to participate. Students who have registered for graduation on line by a semester's graduation registration deadline will receive information about commencement, including the obtaining of academic apparel. The ceremonies include a university commencement ceremony followed by diploma ceremonies. The diploma ceremony of the GRE includes the distribution of diplomas to the candidates both of master's and doctoral degrees.

Only doctoral students who have passed format review and successfully defended their dissertations may walk in the commencement procession, be seated on the dais, and have their names announced during the university commencement ceremony.

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education

Proposed Members of the Dissertation Committee for:

Student

Dissertation Title

Mentor: _____

Reader: _____

Reader: _____

- On an attached sheet of paper, please provide a brief rationale for the selection of your mentor and readers. From recommended readers outside GRE, append a CV.

Approved by the RE Area Committee:

Committee Member _____ **Date** _____

Committee Member _____ **Date** _____

Committee Member _____ **Date** _____

Approved by DEAN _____ **Date** _____

SAMPLE PREAPRED UNDER MY DIRECTION FORM:

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF RELIGION
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This dissertation prepared under my direction by

entitled

has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Religious Education

(signature)

(date)

*****SAMPLE OF DISSERTATION TITLE PAGE**

RENEWING PARISH EDUCATION IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
OF CANADA: IMPLEMENTING THE REFORMS OF
THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

BY

LAURA O'DONELL, Ph.D.
M.A. Memorial State University

Mentor

George Smithfield, Ph.D.

Readers

Peter Wynn, Ed.D.

Mary Silversmith, S.T.D.

DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF RELIGION
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK

2012

Sample VITA

JOHN SMITHFIELD

Date of Birth	June 18, 1969
Place of Birth	Topeka, Kansas
High School	Pawlings Academy Wichita, Kansas June, 1988
Bachelor of Arts	Siena College Albany, New York June, 1992
Master of Arts	St. Joseph's University Wichita, Kansas May, 2000
Doctor of Philosophy Religious Education	Fordham University May, 2012