Becoming Teacher-Scholars:

Doctoral Student Advising, Mentoring, Service, and Teaching in the Department of Theology, Fordham University

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This version of Becoming Teacher-Scholars *incorporates all changes made through August 2023.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Doctoral students participate in the life of the Theology Department in a variety of roles: as students from coursework through to dissertation completion; in departmental service with teaching, research, and administrative assistance; and as emerging junior colleagues in the academy. In each of these roles, doctoral students have different responsibilities, rights, privileges, and obligations. This document, *Becoming Teacher-Scholars*, collects in a single place the department's expectations and policies for doctoral students and the faculty members who advise them.

As students, doctoral students are governed by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) *Policies and Procedures Guidebook*, as well as the regulations specific to the department that are outlined in the *Theology Graduate Student Handbook*. The present document does not provide specific guidance on degree requirements or other academic regulations; please consult these other documents for such information.

Doctoral students serve in a variety of other roles within the department: as Graduate Assistants, Graduate Teaching Assistants, and Teaching Fellows, among others. The sections on service and teaching in this document provide information about the department's expectations of students in each stage of their work on behalf of the department and its students. Please note that in some of these capacities, doctoral students are governed by University-wide human resource policies as well as by academic regulations concerning teaching established by the deans of the undergraduate colleges. Please consult the *Fordham Undergraduate Faculty Handbook*, among other documents, for specific details.

As junior colleagues, doctoral students are beginning to take their first steps into the academic field of theology. The sections of this document concerning academic advising, service, and teaching all bear on doctoral students' development as scholars and as professionals. The academic advisor and dissertation mentor will play especially important roles in advising doctoral students in their capacity as junior scholars.

It is inevitable, given the constraints of academic life in twenty-first century North America, that from time to time some tensions among these roles will become evident. When this happens, doctoral students are encouraged to work with their advisor/mentor, with the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, and with the Department Chair to develop a plan to fulfill all their obligations to the best of their ability. These moments of tension are best approached as opportunities for learning and for growth.

II. ACADEMIC ADVISING

A. Initial Assignment of an Academic Advisor

Upon entering the Ph.D. program, every student is initially assigned an academic advisor in their field of study.

In Systematic Theology, in order to ensure that the field of study's distribution requirements are met, this advisor is the Systematics Coordinator. By the conclusion of the first year of coursework (or sooner, with the Systematics Coordinator's permission), a student may request another member of the Systematics faculty to fill this role. All requests for an initial change in advisor in Systematics should be approved by the current advisor (i.e., the Systematics Coordinator) and the new advisor. Upon approval by both faculty members, the student should inform the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies of the change.

In all other fields of study, students are generally assigned to a faculty member in the respective field whose intellectual interests best align with those of the student (subject to faculty availability). The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies makes these initial assignments in consultation with the Chair of the Graduate Admissions / Recruitment Committee and the relevant faculty. Assignments are made in the summer prior to a doctoral cohort's arrival at Fordham. A student may request a change in advisor at any time.

B. Academic Advising during Coursework

Students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisors regularly during coursework. At a minimum, every student should meet with their advisor to discuss course planning prior to registration for the following term. (For required courses and distribution requirements specific to each field of study, please see the Theology Department's Graduate Student Handbook.) The following are considered best practices:

1. Ordinarily students take three courses per semester. The current full Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) funding package covers twelve credits, which is often enough for a fourth course. Note, however, that in some other departments, graduate courses count for four credits rather than three.

2. Available credits notwithstanding, students should discuss their full range of commitments with their advisors to determine if taking a fourth course is prudent. In no case is the workload from an additional class a legitimate reason for placing lower priority on other required commitments (e.g., Graduate Assistant or Graduate Teaching Assistant work).

3. While comprehensive exam topics are often not finalized until the end of coursework, the student and the advisor should keep a selection of exam topics in view and discuss it on a regular basis. Ideally, decisions related to both depth and breadth in course selection should be made with an eye to anticipated topics for the student's Major Field of Study Exams and

Other Field of Study Exam. The department does not recommend that a student apply for an Other Field of Study Exam in an area in which s(he) has little or no coursework preparation.

4. The decision to take a course or courses outside the Theology Department's regular offerings should be discussed carefully with the advisor. Please note the following guidelines:

    - From time to time, students may be strongly encouraged or required to take one of the department's 5000-level master's-level core courses. It is at the discretion of the instructor whether or not doctoral students in these courses will be required to complete additional or alternative work within the course in order to earn credit for the course.

    - Students in need of remedial ancient language work are permitted to enroll in undergraduate language courses in the Classics Department. Ordinarily these courses do not count toward the twelve required doctoral-level courses.

    - Depending on a student's area, interests, and intellectual trajectory, it may be advisable for the student to take courses in other departments, in the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education, in the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium (IUDC), or in the New York Theological Group. More than one external course per semester is ordinarily not permitted. Per GSAS rules, first-year doctoral students are not allowed to take consortium courses (either IUDC or New York Theological Group). Note that the Chair can authorize exceptions to these rules in extraordinary circumstances.

    - In all cases, decisions to take external courses should be based on compelling intellectual reasons specific to each particular student. The advisor should help the student navigate these decisions, while keeping an eye on the overall profile of courses to ensure sufficient depth in the student's primary field of study and breadth in the different disciplines of theological inquiry.

    - In the case of external master's.-level courses (such as GSRRE courses or master's courses offered at seminaries in the New York Theological Group), in order to count for doctoral credit, specific arrangements for additional workload need to be approved by the Chair and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

    - Ordinarily, students are permitted to take only one course per semester outside the department's regular graduate course offerings This restriction applies not only to external courses as defined above, but also to tutorials taught by departmental faculty members. Exceptions must be approved by the Chair and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. Note that fourth courses are not subject to this restriction. (Thus, e.g., no special permission would be required to take two regularly scheduled departmental course offerings, an external course, and a tutorial in a single semester.)

5. Student course schedules sometimes remain in a fair bit of flux into the first weeks of the semester. This poses a challenge to departmental administrators charged with overseeing the viability of the graduate curriculum as a whole. Yet that challenge can be significantly

mitigated by proactive and ongoing communication between all relevant parties: students, advisors, and departmental administrators. Thus at all times, students remain responsible for informing advisors of any possible changes that may be on the horizon (e.g., adding a consortium course, dropping a departmental class, etc.) or of any registration plans that differ significantly from those discussed in the pre-registration advising meeting. Any relevant information (especially possible changes that could have a significant impact on course enrollments) should be communicated to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

6. Both advisors and students should be especially attentive to the student's plans for timely completion of all language requirements. The advisor should ensure that the student is aware of what languages are required in the respective field of study. (See the Theology Graduate Student Handbook for this information.) The advisor and the student should discuss the student's evolving plans for timely completion of language requirements on a regular basis, making adjustments along the way where necessary. *It should be noted that under no circumstances will a doctoral student be allowed to sit for comprehensive exams prior to passing all language requirements.*

7. During the second year of coursework, students should discuss applying for comprehensive exams with their advisor. Ordinarily, students apply for comprehensive exams in the spring semester of their second year. *The department highly recommends that this timeline be adhered to whenever possible.* The Doctoral Committee will meet twice a semester to consider comprehensive exam topics (as well as to vet dissertation proposals). Both students and advisors should be attentive to Doctoral Committee deadlines so as not inadvertently to miss the opportunity to make this application in the second year.

8. After comprehensive examiners are assigned, the student should set up meetings with examiners as soon as possible. Ideally, students planning to take exams in the spring of the third year should schedule these initial meetings in the spring semester of the second year so as to facilitate maximum time for exam preparation. When in-person meetings prove impossible due to constraints of the academic calendar, telephone or Skype can also be utilized.

C. Annual Reviews During Coursework

In the second semester of both coursework years, each doctoral student is required to write a 1-2 page self-assessment narrative. The narrative should discuss the student's own perception of their academic progress in the context of courses taken, developing intellectual interests, relevant professional development, and plans for the next steps of the program. Guiding questions that *may* be used to write this assessment narrative (but need not be followed slavishly) include the following:

> *Comment on your progress through the program. Are there areas where you are especially pleased with your progress or any aspects of your progress about which you are concerned?*
>
> *What are your career goals? How have your goals evolved since you entered the program and/or since your last annual review? What aspects of your work in the past year most contributed to your future goals?*
>
> *What do you consider your most significant achievement this past year, and why?*
>
> *Have you experienced any academic difficulties this year? If so, offer a reflection on them. What steps are you taking to avoid such difficulties in the future?*
>
> *Offer a brief reflection on the department. How is the department helping to meet your academic and career objectives? Comment on all aspects that apply: academic, administrative, etc.*

After writing this self-assessment narrative, the student (in consultation with the advisor) should then choose a second faculty member to participate in the annual review. While this second faculty member is ordinarily from the student's field of study, in cases where a student's work has strong interdisciplinary dimensions, it may be appropriate to invite the second faculty member from a different field of study. The student then schedules a meeting (approximately one hour) with the two faculty members. *This meeting should take place no later than April 30.*

This process is carried out twice for each doctoral student—that is, once a year during the time that the student is in coursework. For the annual review meeting in the second year, the student may use the same second faculty member. Alternatively—and in consultation with the advisor—the student may invite a different faculty member to serve in this capacity. A change in the second faculty member may be made for intellectual or administrative reasons (i.e., non-availability of a faculty member on leave).

Any problems should be reported to the Chair and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. Please note that the department anticipates use of the designation "Unsatisfactory" only in extremely rare cases where a student is experiencing serious difficulty making progress. In such cases, a follow-up meeting should be scheduled with the student, the advisor, and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

Instructions
Students: Please forward the self-assessment narrative to the advisor and the second faculty member at least one week in advance of the scheduled meeting.

Students and Faculty: Please use the Annual Review Meeting Form and return to the departmental secretary in the department office. Forms are available directly in the office and also on the department's website.

D. Academic Advising and Annual Reviews Following Coursework

After a student's comprehensive exam board is assigned, the faculty member overseeing the "Dissertation Area of Research" exam becomes the student's academic advisor. In the event that the student selects a different faculty member to mentor the dissertation after the successful completion of exams, that faculty member becomes the academic advisor for the remainder of the program.

During the comprehensive exams year: In the year that the student takes comprehensive exams, the oral exam functions as de facto annual review.

After comprehensive exams: While students are writing the dissertation, dissertation committees are encouraged to meet annually with the student to check in and discuss progress. In the event that this proves logistically impossible or the advisor—in consultation with the other committee members—deems an in-person meeting unnecessary, email consultation with readers and a follow-up meeting between student and advisor is an acceptable substitute.

III. SERVICE

Ordinarily, doctoral students with full funding packages are required to serve as Graduate Assistants (GA) during the first two years of their program. Current GSAS requirements stipulate that GA assignments are for a maximum of eighteen hours of work per week. Oftentimes, a GA may be divided between two faculty members or between a faculty member and a departmental or University office; in cases such as these, each assignment can entail up to nine hours of work per week. The department is obligated to assign a certain number of GAs to administrative offices outside Theology, and students assigned in this way are expected to fulfill the requirements of these assignments as professionally as they would an assignment in Theology.

In the second year of coursework, doctoral students will ordinarily be assigned as Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) rather than GAs (see further discussion below). After the second year of coursework, each doctoral student is ordinarily assigned, in addition to her/his teaching duties, to serve as a GA for one faculty member no more than three hours per week.

GA assignments will be made by the Department Chair at least two weeks before the beginning of each semester, and usually much earlier. Upon receiving information about her/his

assignment(s), each doctoral student should contact the faculty member(s) or office(s) to which s/he has been assigned to ascertain what the assignment(s) will entail. Please note that GSAS publishes as part of the academic calendar a set of dates during which GA assignments are effective: doctoral students are required to make themselves available from the beginning to the end of the assignment period, with the exception of University holidays.

Twice each semester, the Department Chair will solicit feedback from faculty members and administrative offices to which GAs have been assigned. Faculty members and administrators will be encouraged to provide the Chair with frank feedback about the effectiveness of each GA. If a GA is reported to be grossly negligent in fulfilling her/his duties at any point, or if a GA receives negative reviews more than once consecutively, the Department Chair may place that GA on probationary status within the department. The terms of the probation will vary based on the seriousness of the concerns mentioned by faculty colleagues and administrators but may include the obligation to keep a time-sheet listing all hours worked for each GA assignment, make-up hours for hours of work not completed during the original assignment period, changes in present or future assignments, and reporting of the student's departmental probationary status to GSAS. Should any problems arise in the fulfillment of a student's GTA duties, this probationary system may also apply.

IV. TEACHING

In the third year of the doctoral program, graduate students will begin teaching their own undergraduate courses (one course per semester in years three through five). Three distinctive opportunities prepare graduate students for effective undergraduate teaching. During the first two years in the program, students a) participate in the Graduate Teaching Assistant Program, b) enroll in the Teaching Theology course, and c) work with a Teaching Mentor from a member of the full-time faculty.

A. The Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) Program

In order both to prepare graduate students to be more effective undergraduate teachers in their third year and also to provide assistance to faculty in semesters of heavy teaching, the Department of Theology has established the Graduate Teaching Assistantship Program. In lieu of a regular GA-ship, second-year students will ordinarily be assigned as a GTA shared between two faculty members over the course of the academic year. The GTA will work as a teaching assistant for one faculty member in the fall semester and the other faculty member in the spring semester.

Best Practices for Doctoral Students

- The GTA will attend all classes of a faculty member's course (ideally *Faith and Critical Reason* or a Sacred Texts and Traditions course) and will complete all assigned readings.

- The GTA will assist the faculty member in handling logistics for the course as needed; these may include (but are not necessarily limited to) scanning, photocopying, library reserves, proctoring exams, and other miscellaneous administrative tasks.

- The GTA will make herself or himself available to meet with undergraduates in the course to discuss papers, respond to drafts, review for exams, etc.

- In the context of hands-on training and mentorship, the GTA will assist the faculty member with grading papers and exams in the course. The vision here is one of shared labor in the context of a mentoring relationship. *GTAs are not simply to be reduced to glorified graders or asked to shoulder the full responsibility for grading in a course.* Rather, the faculty member works together with the GTA in developing rubrics for appropriate grading and oversees the process as a whole. While specifics will no doubt vary in particular courses and contexts, the policy envisions (roughly) that the GTA would assume around 50% of the grading for core courses in a given semester. Faculty members are free to figure out how to distribute this in whatever way works best for the pedagogical goals of the course (i.e., GTA and faculty member each grading half the midterms; graduate student grading final exams and faculty member grading final papers etc.). In all cases, the faculty member remains the instructor of record responsible for final grades and is thus expected to exercise oversight over all grades and paper comments generated by the GTA.

- In cases where a faculty member is teaching multiple sections of the same course, a GTA may assist with (and help to grade) more than one section. The working principle to be followed is that the GTA should be recognizable to members of all courses for which s/he has any significant teaching or grading duties.

    - The application of this principle is flexible: a GTA might split time between two sections 50/50 or might attend one section primarily and another section only occasionally.
    - When a GTA is working with more than one section, the GTA's opportunities to lecture and/or lead discussion should be extended to both sections whenever possible; past experience has shown that the opportunity to perform a pedagogical exercise more than once is quite helpful for our graduate students as they learn how to become effective teachers.
    - The faculty member and the GTA will work out arrangements conducive to each specific situation.

- In all cases, however, the GTA should attend the equivalent of an entire course (whether in one section or split across multiple sections) so as to be fully informed of the course content.

Best Practices for Faculty

- The faculty member will meet regularly with the GTA to discuss the syllabus, course planning, readings, and all other matters related to the course.

- The faculty member will offer the GTA at least two opportunities to give lectures and/or lead discussions in class, will assist the GTA in preparing for those opportunities, and will provide constructive feedback afterwards.

- The faculty member will provide training for the GTA in how best to grade papers and exams and will oversee all grading undertaken by the GTA.

- The faculty member will be responsible for making sure that the GTA fulfills their hourly obligation to the GTA program. All work related to the course(s) in which the GTA is participating—including reading, preparing lectures and discussions, grading, and other responsibilities—count toward the required number of hours. Note that during seasons of heavy grading, the GTA may well be asked to serve more than the usual number of weekly hours, and these additional hours should be prorated across the semester. Any situation of this sort should be identified and discussed between the faculty member and the GTA well in advance.

Administrative Logistics

- Ideally, the two faculty members will be teaching their heavier load on alternate semesters.

- Preference will be given to faculty members who will be working with their GTA in core courses rather than in major courses or electives.

- Faculty members will opt into this program; those who choose to participate will forgo having a regular GA in the semester in which their GTA is working with the other faculty member (although such faculty will still be eligible to apply for 3-hour GAs to assist them with smaller tasks).

- In the event that scheduling conflicts and limited resources make it impossible for every graduate student to be assigned as a GTA in both semesters of the second year, in some cases, and at the discretion of the chair, a student may be assigned as a regular GA in one semester and a GTA in the other.

- In these cases, the ideal "pairing" of two faculty members described above may need to give way to somewhat more flexible and/or complicated arrangements.

- However, in all cases, a faculty member who elects to have a GTA in one semester will forfeit eligibility for a regular GA in the other semester, but remain eligible for 3-hour GA assistance as noted above.

B. The *Teaching Theology* Course

As specified in the Theology Graduate Student Handbook, doctoral students must complete a zero-credit course, *Teaching Theology*, before they are permitted to teach departmental courses as instructors of record. The department will offer *Teaching Theology* at least once every four semesters.

While faculty are free to design their own versions of *Teaching Theology* as they see fit, at a minimum each incarnation of the course should provide concrete training specific to undergraduate teaching at Fordham. This should include (but is not limited to): syllabus design, crafting assignments and exams, strategies and rubrics for grading, tips for balancing lecture and discussion, issues related to academic integrity, basic classroom etiquette, handling challenging in-class dynamics, students in crisis and Title IX issues, and SEEQs. The syllabus may also include more reflective materials on the theory and practice of teaching—e.g., the role of the humanities in undergraduate education, the place of theology in a liberal arts curriculum, education and the millennium generation etc. *Teaching Theology* should also provide a substantive introduction to the role of Theology at multiple levels within Fordham's Core Curriculum.

Instructors of *Teaching Theology* are encouraged to draw on the pedagogical wisdom and resources of the entire departmental faculty by way of guest lectures and presentations throughout the semester.

Regardless of instructor, *Teaching Theology* should always include an assignment in which students design an initial syllabus for *Faith and Critical Reason*. It is understood—and indeed expected—that students will continue to hone and refine this syllabus (often considerably) prior to beginning to teach in the third year.

C. The Teaching Mentorship

All doctoral students are required to be in a teaching mentorship with a member of the full time faculty for at least one academic year (ordinarily the third year of the doctoral program). The identification of a teaching mentor should take place no later than March of the fourth semester. It is the student's responsibility to approach individual faculty members until finding one who is willing and available to serve in this capacity. Once a faculty member has agreed to become a student's teaching mentor, it is also the student's responsibility to convey this information to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies by email.

The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies keeps track of teaching mentor assignments in the departmental records.

Principles for the Selection of Teaching Mentors

- It often makes sense (though is not required) for a student to ask one of the faculty members under whom s/he has worked as a GTA to subsequently serve as the student's teaching mentor.

- Faculty who have benefited from the help of a GTA are generally expected to be willing to serve in this capacity, subject to the following caveats and restrictions:

    - A student's teaching mentor is not ordinarily the same person as their dissertation mentor.
    - A faculty member should not ordinarily take on more than one teaching mentee in any given academic year (exceptions need to be approved by the Chair).
    - The currently serving Chair of the Department and currently serving Associate Chairs do not normally serve as teaching mentors.
    - Any exceptions to the above restrictions need to be approved by the Chair of the Department and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

Responsibilities of Mentees

- After initiating the relationship with the mentor, it is up to the mentee to schedule any needed discussion of pedagogical matters and course content, keeping in mind that faculty members often have very limited (or sometimes no) availability in the summer months.

- The mentee will submit to the mentor a draft syllabus no later than three weeks before the course is scheduled to begin, and will make revisions based on the mentor's advice. It is the responsibility of the mentee to secure approval of the syllabus by the mentor before the first semester of teaching begins.

- The mentee will cooperate with the mentor in scheduling the review(s) of their teaching and will attempt to implement the mentor's suggestions.

- No later than April 30, the mentee will schedule a meeting with the mentor to discuss the mentee's teaching assignments for the following year and what the mentee needs to do to prepare for those assignments. An official review of the coming semester's syllabus is not required unless the teaching mentorship is continuing formally for a second year (see below).

Responsibilities of Mentors

- As needed, the mentor will be available to discuss general matters of pedagogy and course content with the mentee; the mentor will also help the mentee improve and refine the *Faith and Critical Reason* syllabus developed in the *Teaching Theology* seminar.

- The mentor will review the finished syllabus prior to the mentee's first semester of teaching and no later than three weeks before the course is scheduled to begin. The mentor will either approve the syllabus or recommend revisions. Final approval of the syllabus must be secured before the mentee may begin teaching.

- The mentor will conduct a review of the mentee's teaching at least once in the fall semester of the mentee's first year of teaching. At a minimum, the review will include a discussion beforehand about the goals of the specific class being observed and a debriefing session afterwards. It is up to the teaching mentor's discretion whether a second review (following the same protocol) should be conducted in the spring semester.

- No later than April 30, the mentor will meet with the mentee to discuss the upcoming year's teaching assignments (as described above) and remain informally available for consultation about teaching-related matters after the conclusion of the formal teaching mentorship.

Administrative Logistics

- In most cases, a teaching mentorship lasts as a formal arrangement for one full academic year (though doctoral students are encouraged to continue to consult their teaching mentors informally as needed throughout the remainder of their time in the program).

- After a cohort has completed its first semester of teaching, the Chair and the Associate Chairs will review SEEQ data (as well as informal feedback from teaching mentors) and determine whether any of the graduate student teachers in the cohort ought to remain in a formal Teaching Mentorship for a second year.

- The Chair and Associate Chairs will advise faculty members and graduate students regarding which (if any) mentor/mentee relationships need to continue for an additional year.

- This determination will be conveyed by February of the spring semester so that faculty members who will be continuing in mentor/mentee relationship know that they are not available to take on a new mentee.

- The responsibilities for mentors and mentees in the second year of a teaching mentorship are the same as described above.

D. Teaching in the Department

In the third through fifth years of the doctoral program, students serve as Teaching Fellows (unless they receive a GSAS Distinguished Fellowship or other funding that relieves them from teaching duties). Teaching Fellows teach a 1-1 load.

In the third year (i.e., the first year as a Teaching Fellow), all doctoral students will ordinarily be assigned to teach *Faith and Critical Reason*. In the fourth and/or fifth years, students may be assigned to teach a Sacred Texts and Traditions or other course, subject to availability and departmental needs. All students who request it will ordinarily have at least one opportunity to teach another course in addition to Faith and Critical Reason.

The department assigns students to a specific course at a particular campus and time. These assignments are based entirely on departmental needs. It should be noted that continued funding is contingent upon acceptance of one's Teaching Fellowship on these terms.

In general, students are expected to be in residence in the New York area during their doctoral studies and the departmental funding structures are built upon this assumption. Should a student decide that s/he is unable to accept the course assigned by the department according to the terms of the Teaching Fellowship, s/he always has the option to forgo the fellowship. However, students should be advised that ongoing tuition remission is contingent upon acceptance of the Teaching Fellowship. Thus a student who forgoes the fellowship may well incur significant tuition-related financial obligations, depending especially on their stage in the program.

That said, the department has a limited number of online and once-a-week teaching opportunities in Fordham's School of Professional and Continuing Studies that can make it possible for doctoral students to live elsewhere or to commute to New York City one day a week while retaining a Teaching Fellowship. Many students have legitimate reasons to live outside the New York area as well as childcare and other worthy commitments. There are not enough of these more flexible or non-traditional teaching assignments to meet the demand for them and the department cannot take on the burden of adjudicating or evaluating which students' life commitments and constraints are more worthy of support than others. However, in distributing these assignments, departmental leadership will follow the following working principles:

- Prior to scheduling for the upcoming academic year, the Associate Chairs will ask Teaching Fellows and other advanced doctoral students to complete a survey in which they list teaching preferences and inform the Associate Chairs if they would like to be considered for a non-traditional teaching assignment.

- The department will prioritize those students at stages of the program in which the heaviest financial obligations would be incurred should a student forgo the Teaching Fellowship. Thus students who have reached the stage of "Dissertation Direction" (a 1-credit fee equivalent) will be lowest priority for these assignments. Fee equivalents for registration statuses at different stages of the program are listed in the GSAS Policies and Procedures Guidebook, section 5.3.2.

- After surveying the total number of requests, the department will seek to achieve as equitable a distribution of non-traditional teaching assignments as possible. Assignments will be made in one year (rather than single semester) increments, so as to allow students who choose to live outside the New York area to sign full-year leases and the like. However, in subsequent years, students will *not* retain these assignments based on seniority, with the exception of certain online assignments in Fordham School of Professional and Continuing Studies for which a three-semester commitment is required. Instead, priority will be given to those students who have not previously had the opportunity for a non-traditional teaching assignment.

E. Approval of New and Revised Syllabi

The University expects of all instructors, whether tenured or tenure-track faculty, contingent instructors, or graduate students, that any syllabus should reflect the official description of the course concerned. Therefore, in each semester in which a doctoral student (whether appointed as a Teaching Fellow or Teaching Associate) teaches a course for the first time, or else substantially revises the syllabus of a course that the student has previously taught, the new or revised syllabus shall be approved.

A student teaching a course that falls within the terms of the previous paragraph will submit a draft syllabus for approval no later than three calendar weeks before the start of the semester concerned, not excluding University holidays.

A student who is working actively with a teaching mentor will submit the draft syllabus to the teaching mentor. Students who have concluded the formal teaching mentorship program may choose to submit the draft syllabus either to their former teaching mentor or to the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies for the campus at which the course is to be taught.

The reviewer will indicate to the student in writing what, if any, changes shall be made before the syllabus can be approved. The student will implement all changes requested by the reviewer of the syllabus and submit a revised syllabus to the reviewer no later than a week before the start of the semester concerned. The reviewer will provide final approval by writing to the Associate chair for Undergraduate Studies for the campus at which the course is to be taught.

If a syllabus has not been approved by the first day of the semester, the Chair, in consultation with the administration of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, may take appropriate corrective action, including by revoking the student's assignment to teach the course concerned.

This policy will take effect beginning with courses to be taught in the Fall 2018 semester.

V. MASTER TIMELINE

The following table represents ideal progress toward the Ph.D. during the first five years of full-time enrollment; while it is hoped that students will be able to complete the degree during this period of time, many students require one or more additional years to do so. It should be noted that delaying any of the milestones in this table is likely to have ongoing implications for a student's ability to complete the degree on time.

Year	Areas	Milestones
1	*Coursework*	Ordinarily three classes per semester, plus *Teaching Theology* if offered
	Preparation for Language Exams	Offered three times per semester
	Graduate Assistant Assignment	
	Annual Review	Self-assessment narrative and meeting with two faculty members; no later than April 30
2	*Coursework*	Ordinarily three classes per semester, plus *Teaching Theology* if offered
	Completion of Language Exams	Offered three times per semester
	Graduate Teaching Assistantship Assignment	Ordinarily with two faculty members
	Annual Review	Self-assessment narrative and meeting with two faculty members; no later than April 30
	Identify Teaching Mentor	No later than March 5
	Comprehensive Examinations	Fall: begin identifying topics; spring: apply for comprehensive exams before the second meeting of the Doctoral Committee
3	*Comprehensive Examinations*	Fall: prepare for comprehensive exams; spring: take exams 1-1 teaching load
	Teaching	
	Teaching Mentorship	Submit *Faith and Critical Reason* syllabus for teaching mentor's approval three weeks prior to fall semester; meet with teaching mentor concerning next year's teaching assignments no later than April 30
	Dissertation Proposal	Begin writing proposal after comprehensive exams
4	*Dissertation Proposal*	Submit dissertation proposal to Doctoral Committee, ideally in fall semester
	Dissertation Writing	
	Teaching	1-1 teaching load
	Teaching Mentorship	If required
5	*Dissertation Writing*	
	Teaching	1-1 teaching load
6+	*Dissertation Writing*	Though not required, a 2-2 teaching load may be available to graduate students in residence still finishing, depending on departmental needs and course availability.