

# Religion MA

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## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Learn more about the Master of Arts in Religion.

## About the Program

The Department of Religion at Temple University offers a 30-credit master's program. For those seeking to qualify for the PhD program at Temple University or other leading universities, it offers intensive training in research methods and in special fields of concentration in religion studies. Note, however, that admission to the Temple PhD program requires a separate application and the completion of qualifying examinations not required for the MA degree.

For those who plan to teach religious studies in community colleges or high schools, the MA degree provides advanced training in methods of research and in-depth study of the world's major religious traditions. For those in various forms of religious ministry, it offers post-graduate training and exposure to the newest research methods and developments for use in understanding their own or other religious and cultural traditions. For those who wish to bring cultural and cross-cultural analytical tools to professions such as business, government, journalism, medicine and social work, the MA degree provides additional training in research methods and graduate-level study in the major world religious and cultural traditions. For qualified persons in the general public, it allows the opportunity to acquire competence in the study of religions, values and cultures broadly defined, and in areas of special interest to the student.

**Time Limit for Degree Completion:** 3 years

**Campus Location:** Main

**Full-Time/Part-Time Status:** The degree program can be completed on a full- or part-time basis.

**Areas of Specialization:** The MA program offers two areas of concentration, each of which allows students to choose between the Thesis Option and the Portfolio Option:

- Religion, Values and Global Cultures in the world's religious traditions and various Western and Asian religious and values traditions.
- Religion, Values and Public Life, historical, philosophical and social-science methods of study in the field of Religion and various areas of the interaction of religion and values in public life, such as interfaith dialogue, race/gender/sexuality and religion, religion and ethics, and religion and the political process.

Upon entering the program, students choose their area of concentration. While admission requirements and procedures are identical, requirements for the degree vary.

**Job Prospects:** The master's degree at Temple University is viewed as enhancement of knowledge about religion for those already employed in various professional capacities or as the foundation for pursuit of a PhD degree.

**Non-Matriculated Student Policy:** Non-matriculated students may complete three graduate courses before being admitted into the degree program. Credit toward a subsequent degree program at Temple University is limited to 9 credits.

**Financing Opportunities:** University Fellowships, Graduate Assistantships, and Academic Internships are ordinarily reserved for PhD students.

## Admission Requirements and Deadlines

### Application Deadline:

*Fall:* January 15

Applications are evaluated together after the deadline.

*APPLY ONLINE to this graduate program.*

### Letters of Reference:

*Number Required:* 3

*From Whom:* Recommendations should be obtained from former instructors or academic persons who know the applicant best.

**Coursework Required for Admission Consideration:** Applicants are invited to consult with the Graduate Director regarding specific academic preparation.

**Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline:** A baccalaureate degree is required, with a degree earned in a Liberal Arts discipline preferred. Applicants with no Liberal Arts background should consult with the Graduate Director.

**Statement of Goals:** In 2 to 3 pages, describe your background and specific interests and reasons for pursuing an MA in Religion, demonstrating knowledge of the scope and limits of the Department of Religion's offerings and outlook.

**Standardized Test Scores:**

GRE: Optional. Scores may be submitted if available. The GRE is waived for international students whose native language is not English, but the minimum TOEFL must be achieved and reported.

Applicants who earned their baccalaureate degree from an institution where the language of instruction was other than English, with the exception of those who subsequently earned a master's degree at a U.S. institution, must report scores for a standardized test of English that meet these minimums:

- TOEFL iBT: 100
- IELTS Academic: 7.0
- PTE Academic: 68

**Resume:** Current resume required.

**Writing Sample:** The writing sample should demonstrate your ability to research and write a scholarly paper. The paper should be no more than 10 pages in length and fully referenced according to a professional, scholarly style manual. It should be in the field of Religious Studies or a closely related area.

**Transfer Credit:** Courses taken at an accredited institution that are compatible with the offerings at Temple's Department of Religion and graded "B" or better are eligible for transfer credit. The maximum number of credits a student may transfer is 6.

## Program Requirements

**General Program Requirements:**

*Number of Credits Required Beyond the Baccalaureate:* 30

*Required Courses:*

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Foundations Courses		12
Advanced Seminars and/or Independent Study		12
Additional Courses <sup>1</sup>		6
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>30</b>

<sup>1</sup> Students can take 3 to 6 credits of coursework outside the Department of Religion in a cognate field at Temple University.

**Language Examination:** Reading knowledge of a language relevant to the area of focus is required. However, at the discretion of the student's supervisory committee, this requirement can be waived for those who are planning to do graduate work that does not require foreign language proficiency.

**Culminating Event:** No later than upon completion of their first 18 credits of coursework in either the Religion, Values and Global Cultures concentration or the Religion, Values and Public Life concentration, the student must choose either the thesis or portfolio option:

- The Thesis Option is recommended for, but not limited to, students intending to apply to a doctoral program or planning to teach at the college level. Six credits must be taken in a 3-credit Independent Study that prepares the student to register the following term for a 3-credit MA thesis project under the direction of a thesis advisor. Reading knowledge of a language relevant to the thesis topic and oral defense of the thesis are required.
- The Portfolio Option is recommended for students to augment their primary area of experience and professional training in fields other than Religion.

Upon choosing an option, the student then selects an advisor for the final project who has primary responsibility for supervising the student's work for the remainder of the program and is the primary reader of the thesis or portfolio. This choice must be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.

*Thesis:*

For the [Thesis Option](#), a thesis is required.

Note that the [Portfolio Option](#) requires successful completion of coursework.

## Contacts

### Program Web Address:

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/religion-ma-la-rel-ma>

### Department Information:

Dept. of Religion  
611 Mazur Hall  
1114 W. Polett Walk  
Philadelphia, PA 19122-6090  
[religiongradstudies@temple.edu](mailto:religiongradstudies@temple.edu)  
215-204-3663

### Submission Address for Application Materials:

<https://apply.temple.edu/CLA/>

### Department Contacts:

#### *Admissions:*

Irina Segal  
[irina.kasharsky@temple.edu](mailto:irina.kasharsky@temple.edu)  
215-204-1742

#### *Graduate Chairperson:*

Douglas Duckworth, PhD  
[duckworth@temple.edu](mailto:duckworth@temple.edu)

#### *Chairperson:*

Khalid Blankinship, PhD  
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