



LOVE
HOLDS
US IN
UNION

Union Theological Seminary
Entering Class '20

2020 Orientation Schedule
All times are U.S. Eastern Standard Time (UTC-05:00)

Tuesday, September 1

Welcome to Union

9:00-9:30 a.m.

Listen to President Serene Jones, Dean Kelly Brown Douglas and Dean Pamela Cooper-White kick off orientation by offering their greetings and welcoming you to Union. They will reflect on why -- now more than ever -- this is the right time to study at Union, and discuss how we can hold each other accountable as a beloved community as we begin the academic year.

Love in Action - Student-Only Welcome

9:45-10:45 a.m.

Spend time with the orientation ambassadors, Student Senate representatives and residential student life assistants getting to know current students on campus, as well as your incoming class.

Introduction to Worship and Spiritual Formation at Union

11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Meet the interfaith minister team, including our interim director of worship, student worship assistants, spiritual care providers and peer chaplains. Hear what is available to you spiritually, what happens in chapel and how you can partner with us.

Break

12:00-12:30 p.m.

Academic Year Overview and Q&A

12:30-1:00 p.m.

Dean Nicole Mirando and Registrar Abigail Asgaralli introduce procedures and deadlines throughout the academic year to help you complete your degree in a timely manner and understand the academic year timeline. There will also be space to ask questions about academic administrative details.

Introducing the Library: Resources, Support and Exploration

1:15-2:00 p.m.

The Burke Library is a key part of the learning experience at Union. Meet Public Services Librarian Carolyn Bratnobar from The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, a Union alum with years of theological librarianship experience, for an overview of the services and resources available to all Union students. Learn key information about obtaining course readings online. Identify research services and support channels available in-person and remotely, such as the Ask A Librarian Chat feature, for getting help with research, citations and formatting, and I.T. troubleshooting. Get tips and tricks for exploring the vast online multimedia resources available through the Columbia University Libraries.

Breathe Easy (optional)

2:30-3:30 p.m.

Feel free to exhale after your first day at Union. We will hold a student-only space for those who may want to check in with their peers or just unwind.



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Wednesday, September 2

Introduction to Faculty and Academic Fields

9:00-11:30 a.m.

Union faculty present their areas of expertise to introduce themselves and their fields of study.

Break

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Degree Breakout Sessions (M.A., MDiv, STM, PhD)

12:30-1:30 p.m.

Attend this required information session based on your academic program for an in-depth overview of the degree and your requirements.

Concentration Breakouts

1:30-2:30 p.m.

If you intend to concentrate in Anglican Studies, Chaplaincy, Buddhism and Interreligious Engagement, Islam and Interreligious Engagement, Psychology and Religion, or Ministry and Social Work dual-degree, connect with faculty advisors, administrators and students/alums about specific requirements. Not all concentrations have a breakout session.

Worship (optional)

3:00-3:30 p.m.

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Thursday, September 3

Academic Advising Appointments

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

You are assigned a 15-20 minute appointment with an academic advisor during this period to visit about your fall schedule and intentions for your degree program. Look for another email with your Zoom appointment closer to orientation.

Break

12:00-1:00 p.m.

An Embodied Relational Ethic

1:00-3:00 p.m.

A workshop facilitated by The Rev. Edgard Francisco Danielson, PhD LP, on creating beloved community around sexuality, consent and boundaries. During the workshop, participants engage in activities that will model empathic listening and dialogue, learn about storytelling as a tool for liberation, and delve into queer theology as embodied and intersectional theology. Participants also explore sexual ethics and self-care through the lens of a relational approach.

Academic Resources (optional)

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Orient yourself to the writing center at Union with Dr. Amy Meverden, as well as best practices for utilizing technology and Moodle with Chris McFadden.

Registrar Office Hours (optional)

5:00-8:00 p.m.

Dean Nicole Mirando and Registrar Abigail Asgaralli hold office hours to answer student questions about course registration and general degree requirements. We encourage you to pop by if you can! We'd love to get to know the incoming class. Join us for virtual social time!

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Friday, September 4

Registrar Office Hours (optional)

8:00-10:00 a.m.

Dean Nicole Mirando and Registrar Abigail Asgaralli will hold office hours to answer student questions about course registration and general degree requirements. We encourage you to pop by if you can! We'd love to get to know the incoming class. Join us for virtual social time!

Courageous Conversations

10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

About Race, Identity, Racism and Black Lives Matter

Facilitated by Takiema Bunche-Smith, MPA, MEd., students will be guided to reflect on how race, identity and racism shape their lives in small and large ways, and especially as they move into their lives and work at Union. The session will also support participants to understand the historical contexts and current implications of anti-Black racism as the U.S. continues to contend with the double pandemic of COVID-19 and systemic racism. The session will be interactive and respectful of various learning needs as we gather remotely to embark upon and continue courageous conversations in community with each other. A break will also be included.

Closing Reflections

1:30-2:00 p.m.

Join the orientation team for the final mandatory session to share closing reflections as we transition into the school year.

Course Registration Opens via SSO/NetClassroom

2:00 p.m.

Registrar Office Hours (optional)

2:00-6:00 p.m.

Dean Nicole Mirando and Registrar Abigail Asgaralli will hold office hours to answer student questions about course registration and general degree requirements. We encourage you to pop by if you can! We'd love to get to know the incoming class. Join us for virtual social time!

Community Practice Group (optional)

3:00-4:00 p.m.

Join current students Kimberley Gordy, Shelley Burt, Ellie Hutchison Cervantes and James Mannion as they facilitate a community-building group for incoming students. The community practice group meets regularly throughout the school year.

2020 Post-Orientation Schedule
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Saturday, September 5

Getting into Community (optional)

5:00-6:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Ministers of Fun Bridget Webster and Ryan Felder and hosted by the Union Student Senate, this is a chance for returning students and new students to meet one another, get to know each other, and find new directions to continue the work of our wonderful community.

Sunday, September 6

Virtual Worship (optional)

Times vary

Click [here](#) to find a spreadsheet with virtual worship communities mostly based in New York City for you to join during your time at Union.

Wednesday, October 7

**Columbia Sexual Violence Response Team
and Columbia Health Presentation**

12:30-1:30 p.m.

This is a mandatory session for all incoming and current students at Union based on updated guidelines. More information and specific details will be provided in the coming weeks.

Convocation

5:00 p.m.

Join the Union Theological Seminary community virtually as we enter into the 2020-2021 academic year and welcome the entering class of 2020.