

MASTER OF ARTS

ACADEMIC PROGRAM GUIDE



Photograph by: Roy Weinstein, 2011

2018 - 2019

Master of Arts (MA) Program Guide

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Union Theological Seminary Mission Statement

Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York is a seminary and a graduate school of theology established in 1836 by founders “deeply impressed by the claims of the world upon the church.” Union prepares women and men for committed lives of service to the church, academy, and society.

A Union education develops practices of mind and body that foster intellectual and academic excellence, social justice, and compassionate wisdom. Grounded in the Christian tradition and responsive to the needs of God’s creation, Union’s graduates make a difference wherever they serve.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Description and Purpose

The Master of Arts (MA) is designed as a two-year degree program for those studying full-time. The purpose of the program is to provide students with a “basic understanding of theological disciplines for further graduate study or for general educational purposes” that will enrich students’ work in their chosen professions (ATS Standard D.1.1).

While the Union MA is primarily an academic degree that prepares students for advanced studies and teaching, it also prepares students for a variety of other professional positions in diverse academic and non-academic contexts.

Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

In keeping with the vision of Union’s founders that Union graduates should be equipped by their education to “respond to the claims of the world” with “intellectual and academic excellence, social justice, and compassionate wisdom,” Union’s curricula for all degree programs intentionally engage disparities in society based on gender, race, class, sexuality, religion and other divisive or marginalizing forces. Studying in this environment is both a strength and a challenge.

The program goals and learning outcomes for the Union MA program are grouped into three areas: *Religious Heritage, Cultural Context, and Specialized Competency* in a theological concentration. The program goals in each of these areas reflect the faculty’s general aspirations for student learning. The desired learning outcomes associated with each goal identify the knowledge and skills that students are expected to be able to demonstrate when they successfully complete the MA program. Successful graduates of the MA program should be well equipped to apply their learning in contemporary contexts both within and beyond academia.

RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Goal 1: To develop a broad, critical understanding of Christian traditions in their scriptural foundations, historical developments, and theological perspectives.

Learning Outcomes:

1.1. Demonstrates an ability to identify, describe, analyze, and to interpret biblical texts in their literary, historical, and multi-religious contexts.

- 1.2. Demonstrates an ability to identify, describe, and to discuss significant periods, persons, and developments in the history of the Christian tradition(s).
- 1.3. Demonstrates an ability to recognize, explain, and to critically evaluate major theological themes, issues, and perspectives in Christian thought.

Goal 2: To cultivate inter-religious awareness and deepen understanding of the Christian heritage through substantive engagement with the thought and practices of traditions other than Christianity.

Learning Outcome:

- 2.1. Demonstrates substantive engagement with the thought and practices of traditions other than Christianity.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

Goal 3: To develop competencies in understanding social and cultural contexts that are significant for contemporary theology, the life of the church, and the promotion of justice in the world.

Learning Outcomes:

- 3.1. Demonstrates an ability to work with persons of diverse backgrounds, to learn from differences, and to articulate one's own cultural and social perspectives with acknowledgment of their limitations.
- 3.2. Demonstrates an ability to articulate contextually informed and world-engaged theological perspectives.
- 3.3. Demonstrates an ability to analyze and address contemporary ethical issues from Christian and interreligious perspectives.

Goal 4: To enrich theological work by incorporating the arts and cultural diversity of New York City. [Discontinued as of fall 2018 by vote of the faculty]

Learning Outcome:

- 4.1. Demonstrates an ability to incorporate the arts, cultural diversity, international, and/or socio-economic dimensions of New York City into theological reflection. [Discontinued as of fall 2018 by vote of the faculty]

SPECIALIZED COMPETENCY IN A CONCENTRATION

Goal 5: To attain competency in the student's chosen concentration in preparation for advanced studies, teaching, or for application in non-academic public and organizational contexts.

Learning Outcomes:

- 5.1. Demonstrates an ability to identify, describe, discuss, employ, and to communicate the sources, norms, methods, substantive content, and literature of the student's chosen concentration.
- 5.2. Demonstrates the capacity to integrate specialized competency in the student's chosen concentration into critical and constructive theological reflection that is both informed by

and applicable to contemporary social, cultural, interreligious, or justice issues or within particular public, organizational, communal, or interpersonal contexts.

Goal 6: To attain competency in academic research and writing skills.

Learning Outcomes:

6.1. Demonstrates an ability to locate and utilize relevant primary and secondary sources for critical and constructive work in the student's chosen discipline.

6.2. Demonstrates the ability to write a thesis-driven essay within the student's chosen concentration that is clearly written, cogently argued, and sufficiently substantiated with properly cited references to scholarly resources.

Goal 7: To attain proficiency in a modern language (and in the case of the Biblical concentration, a working knowledge of Hebrew and/or Greek)

Learning Outcome:

7.1. Demonstrates the ability to read and accurately translate texts in French, German, or Spanish (and for Biblical Studies concentrators, in Hebrew or Greek)

II. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The MA degree requires that students complete a minimum of **51 credits**. Students are permitted – and even encouraged – to exceed the minimum requirements of the degree.

All MA Students will acquire broad and basic knowledge and academic skills by taking a common core of courses in the “classical” theological disciplines of *Bible*, *Church History*, and *Theology/Ethics* and in the interdisciplinary field of *Interreligious Engagement*. Students are required to take a minimum number of credits in each of these fields.

MA students are also encouraged to take courses in disciplines within the Practical Theology field, as appropriate to their individual learning goals. The disciplines included in the Practical Theology field include *Preaching & Worship* (CW), *Communication Arts* (CA), *Religion & Education* (RE), *Psychology and Religion* (PS), *Church and Society* (CS), and other Practical Theology (PT) courses. MA students are required to take a minimum number of elective courses in their area of concentration and to pursue that concentration.

In spring 2018, the Assessment Committee and Faculty voted to discontinue the MA track II based on a recommendation from the Association of Theological Schools and low enrollment in the program. As of the 2018 incoming class, all MA students will complete a thesis and modern language exam (formerly known as track I).

Students are asked to declare their concentration at the beginning of their program, even though the majority of advanced electives in the student's concentration do not begin until the second year. At the latest, students are required to declare a concentration by December 15th in the first semester. This early declaration is intended to assist the seminary in curricular development and planning; to maximize from the outset the fruitfulness of individual students' advisement, course,

and career planning; and to allow sufficient lead-time for students to develop their thesis proposal.

Course Distribution Requirements and Concentrations

The following charts outline the course distribution requirements for the MA degree and the possible concentrations:

MASTER OF ARTS CREDIT DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS	
	Number of Credits Required
CORE COURSES	
Bible	7-8 cr.
History	5-6
Theology	6
IE	3
CONCENTRATION	
Advanced courses (level 200+)	15
Thesis	6
MODERN LANGUAGE	Exam required; no credit
GENERAL ELECTIVES	8-9
TOTAL POINTS (minimum)	51

See **Appendix B** for a list of concentrations and requirements for each concentration.

Course Load and Planning

Students are not permitted to take more than 15 credits in any one semester or more than 30 credits in an academic year, exclusive of the January and/or Summer terms unless they have written permission from the Academic Dean.

Students are expected to complete their required core course requirements as early as possible. The early completion of the foundational courses equips the student with the basic vocabulary, data, and concepts necessary for closer or more advanced and specialized study in the core fields, the area of concentration, and/or in other subjects in the curriculum. Early completion of the core field requirements also provides preparation for taking courses at outside schools.

The MA Program Planner lists specifically required courses and credit distribution requirements within a convenient form that facilitates course planning for each semester. Students can use this form to check off courses when completed and to track progress toward completing degree requirements. Students should review and utilize the MA Program Planner periodically in Appendix A.

SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Core Field Requirements

Bible: [7-8 cr.] Students must take a minimum of 7 credits in this field, consisting of a 4-credit *Introduction to the Bible* course (BX 101) and a 3-credit elective in any Old Testament (OT), New Testament (NT), Cross Testament (BX) course.

Bible concentrators are required to fulfill their core field requirement by taking OT 101 (4 cr.) and NT 101(4 cr.) for a total of 8 credits.

History: [5-6 cr.] Students must take a minimum of 5 credits in this field, consisting of a 3-credit course entitled *Christianity in Historical Perspective* (CH 101) and either a 2 or 3-credit course in the Historical field.

History concentrators are required to fulfill their core History requirements by taking these three 2-credit courses for a total of 6 credits: CH 107 (Early Church period), CH 108 (Medieval and Reformation period), and CH 109 (Modern period).

Theology: [6 cr.] A minimum of six credits must be earned in this field. Students must take one of the 100-level Systematic Theology courses (either ST 103 or 104) for 3 credits. To complete the requirements in this field, students may take an additional 3-credit course in Systematic Theology (ST), Christian Ethics (CE), or Philosophy of Religion (PR).

Interreligious Engagement: [3 cr.] The 3-credit minimum may be satisfied by taking any course in this field.

Concentration Requirements

Advanced Courses (level 200 and above): Students are required to take a minimum of 15 credits in advanced courses of their choosing within their area of concentration.

Students who elect an interdisciplinary concentration may cluster their advanced courses around the history, practices, and concerns of a particular group or sector of society (such as women, LGBTQ people, incarcerated people, people who are poor); and/or an issue or problem that deploys perspectives and tools of multiple disciplines and fields (such as eco-theology/ethics; theology and the arts; the Bible and..., etc.) In order to declare an interdisciplinary concentration, students must talk with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. See Appendix B for a list of concentrations and specific requirements for each concentration.

Language Requirement [exam, no credit]

Students are required to pass a modern language reading proficiency exam, preferably before beginning the second year. It is also strongly recommended that Bible concentrators take two semesters of either Hebrew or Greek, depending on their concentration. Courses in German, French, and Spanish are offered each fall semester. Exams in these languages are offered twice each semester (fall and spring). See the current course catalog for more information and specific dates.

Thesis Requirement [6 cr.]

A formal thesis paper or summative project (accompanied by a shorter paper) in the area of concentration is required. A Thesis Topic Declaration form must be signed by the faculty advisor and submitted to the Registrar no later than the Friday before Thanksgiving in the second year (or in the academic year in which the Thesis will be submitted). For up-to-date forms, thesis guidelines and other information concerning the thesis requirement, please consult the Registrar's website pages or the Registrar's office.

A thesis writing seminar (UT 150 and 151) is offered during the academic year. While students are not required to take this seminar if they are writing a thesis, it is highly recommended that they do so.

General Electives: [8-9 cr.]

The minimum number of required general electives varies from 8 to 9 credits, depending on the student's choice of courses in the biblical and historical fields. Through general electives, students may exceed the minimum requirements for the degree in order to pursue particular interests and to prepare for the professions they intend to pursue. While students who are not concentrating in a discipline within the field of practical theology are not required to do so, they are encouraged to include one or more practical theology courses among their general electives as schedules permit.

SU (Supplemental Co-curricular) Courses: Students may take SU courses that provide opportunities for spiritual and personal enrichment (e.g., *Topics in Spirituality*, SU 125) and/or the acquisition of practical professional and ministerial skills (e.g., *Topics in Ministry*, SU 190). Students may take as many SU courses as they wish **but only three SU course credits may be counted toward their general elective degree requirements**. Please consult the course catalog for other SU courses on various topics, most of which may be taken for 1 credit.

Guided Reading: Students may propose a guided reading for 1, 2, or 3 credits with the approval and under the direction of a member of the faculty. Students must submit a written guided reading proposal, signed by the faculty member, for the approval of the Academic Dean. The guided reading request form may be obtained via the Registrar's website pages.

Courses Taken Concurrently in Other Schools: With the written approval of the faculty advisor and of the Academic Dean, MA students may take up to twelve (12) graduate-level elective credits in courses offered at other accredited schools. Courses that are listed in the Union catalog may *not* be taken at other schools. Registration for outside courses is normally limited to one course per semester.

Partner schools are those with which Union has a cross-registration or other credit recognition agreement. Partner schools include *only* the following:

- *New York Theological School Consortium* signatories: Drew University Seminary, Fordham University GSAS, General Theological Seminary, Hebrew Union College, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York Theological Seminary, and St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

- *Some Columbia University Schools:* Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), School of the Arts, and the School of International and Public Affairs. Courses taken at these schools must be at the 3000-level or higher.
- *Please note that Columbia University Teacher's College is not a partner school.*

Cost: Graduate courses taken with Union approval at schools within the *New York Theological Consortium* may be taken at no additional cost to Union students. See **Appendix C** for cost to students taking courses at *Columbia University*. The cost of taking courses at non-partner schools is the student's sole responsibility, although students may apply to the Academic Dean for a subsidy. It is within the discretion of the Academic Dean to grant or deny, in whole or in part, a tuition subsidy for courses taken in non-partner schools.

Permission and Earned Credit: Students who wish to take courses in *any* outside partner and non-partner school must complete an application form that is signed by the faculty advisor and submitted to the Academic Dean for approval. Approvals must be obtained in advance of registration for the course if a student desires credit to be applied toward fulfillment of Union degree requirements. A minimum grade of B (or equivalent) must be earned for credit to be counted toward fulfillment of the Union degree.

Registration: Students must register at Union for every course they take, whether at Union or at an outside school. Signed approval forms must be brought by the student to the Office of the Registrar. In some cases, students will have to register at the outside school as well.

Please read *Information About Taking Courses at Other Institutions* (**Appendix C**) for important details, instructions and procedures.

III. ADVISEMENT

Consultations with faculty advisors may take place for a variety of purposes within a variety of contexts. Academic advisement may take place at any time and students are strongly encouraged to seek advisement as needed. However, the Seminary has established specific requirements for each degree program with regard to advisement consultations that must take place prior to registration periods.

Registration for Fall Courses:

All incoming students are *required* to meet, in person, with their assigned faculty advisor for curricular advisement prior to Fall registration for the first year of study. First semester curricular advisement normally takes place during the Fall orientation period in August/September.

Online course registration for the Fall of the second year of study normally takes place in April. Registration consultations in April with faculty advisors are *required* to be in person. Students do not have to consult with their advisors again in September if they have had a consultation in the previous April.

First-year students are required to complete program planners with their faculty advisors at both the Fall registration conference and the Spring pre-registration conference. Ideally, the program

planner prepared in the Fall will map out the first year of study, and the program planner prepared in the Spring will map out the second year of study. These are to be signed by both the student and the faculty advisor and must be deposited into the student's ePortfolio. (more about ePortfolios below in section IV.) ***Students are responsible for keeping their advisors informed about any changes of plan that may take place along the way, and for seeking advisement as needed.***

Registration for Spring Courses:

Online course registration for Spring courses normally takes place in November. First-year students are required to consult with their advisor prior to registration for the Spring semester. While it is highly recommended that this consultation take place in person, the student and advisor may agree to consult by phone, email, or video conference. However, registration for the Spring in the first year of study will remain blocked by a "hold" until the faculty advisor certifies to the Registrar (via email) that there has been a meaningful registration consultation.

Second-year students are strongly encouraged, but are not required, to consult with their advisors prior to registration for Spring classes. However, second-year students are *required* to check in with their advisors for general advisement purposes *at least once* before the last day of classes in the Fall semester of the final year.

Beyond the required advisement sessions with faculty advisors, *all* faculty members, the Academic Dean and Associate Deans, and senior administrative staff are ready and willing to offer advisement in their areas of expertise and competency. Please take the initiative in asking for the advice that you need.

IV. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AND CURRICULAR EFFECTIVENESS

Assessment of student learning at Union is a comprehensive and continuous process that takes place at both the course level and program level. The purpose of this process is twofold: (1) to provide students with feedback on their progress toward and achievement of personal, course, and program learning goals; and (2) to provide the administration and faculty with a means by which to continually evaluate program effectiveness so that modifications and improvements to the curriculum can be made.

All students at Union have been provided with a personal ePortfolio into which evidence of their fulfillment of degree requirements and of their learning achievement is collected and periodically reviewed. Students manage their ePortfolios through the Google Drive that is affiliated with their @utsnyc.edu email account. The ePortfolio will not be accessible in personal Gmail accounts. See **Appendix D** for ePortfolio access and document uploading instructions.

The current assessment plan requires that the following documents be deposited into the ePortfolios at specified times (by specified persons) over the course of the student's progression through the program. ***Please note that failure to submit required materials may result in a hold on your account, which will prevent online registration, transcript requests, and receiving your diploma.***

Preliminary documents (deposited by one week before first Advisement meeting in Orientation)

1. Entrance Questionnaire (by Academic Office staff)
2. Admissions Essay (by Academic Office staff)
3. Current résumé or CV, as available (by Academic Office staff or student, periodically updated by student)
4. Program Planners (by student after being completed and signed by student and faculty advisor; to be deposited into the ePortfolio within 7 days of required pre-registration advisement).

Registrar's documents (deposited by April 15th of 2nd year):

5. Unofficial transcript containing narrative course evaluations and grades (by Academic Office staff prior to ePortfolio reviews)

Academic work: use this naming convention: Last Name First Name Course # Instructor Name Genre/title; for example, Bidlack Beth NT101 Niang Exegetical Paper (or Revelation Paper):

6. Two essays that have contributed significantly to achievement of learning goals (from different fields), including the professors' comments (deposited by student)
 - (a) first essay, from a *required* core course, by April 15th of the first year
 - (b) second essay, from an advanced course in the student's concentration, by April 15th of the second year.
7. Thesis topic declaration and proposal (deposited by student on or before November due date)
8. The thesis/thesis project (written and/or electronically recorded components) (deposited by student on or before Registrar's due date)

Assessment Surveys and Reports:

9. Student Self-Assessment Survey [SSAS] (deposited by student by April 15st, second year)
10. Final Assessment Report [FAR] (prepared by faculty advisor and student; electronically submitted by faculty by June 15st of graduating year)

Psychology & Religion Concentrators: Add your CPE evaluation to your ePortfolio.

Summary of Due Dates for ePortfolio Documents (Required to be Deposited by Students)	
Due Date	Document Number (see above)
Before first advisement and registration	#1, #2, #3
Within 7 days after first advisement	#4
April 15th (first and second year)	#6(a); 6(b)
November, second year	#7
April 15, second year	#5, #8
April 30, second year	#9
June 30	#10

Notes on the Assessment Process

Entrance Questionnaire: The assessment process begins with the Entrance Questionnaire (EQ). The EQ includes a benchmark measure of a student’s current competencies in the outcomes associated with *religious heritage*, *cultural context*, and *specialized knowledge* in one of the theological disciplines. During and at the end of the program, these competencies will be revisited to see how far the student’s learning and skills have progressed.

The Essays: Near the end of the first year students are required to deposit at least one essay from a required course into the ePortfolio (April 15th due date). The selected essay should be one that best reflects the learning outcomes associated with the *religious heritage* and *cultural context* program goals. The second essay, from an advanced course that reflects the learning outcomes in the student’s area of concentration, should be deposited into the ePortfolio prior to April 15th.

Graduating Student Questionnaire: This is completed online shortly before graduation.

Alumni/ae Questionnaire: The assessment process may conclude with an ATS Alumni/ae Questionnaire that you will receive shortly after graduation. Note that Union does not participate in the ATS graduating student questionnaire every year.

Assessment is not a credit-bearing process. The Seminary is required by its accreditation agencies to assess all of its programs. Therefore, participation in and completion of the assessment process in a timely manner is a requirement for advancement through the program and conferral of the degree.

Schedule of Student-Faculty Advisement and Assessment Conferences and Consultations			
	September (for Fall semester)	November- December (for Spring Semester)	April (for Fall semester or graduation)
1 st yr.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> advisement PP	√ advisement (hold)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> advisement PP
2 nd yr.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> advisement PP (only if not registered in April)	√ advisement at least once by end of Fall semester	SSAS by April 30 FAR by June 30)
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = advisement must be in person √ = advisement must be some meaningful consultation (hold) = in place until Advisor notifies Registrar that advisement has occurred</p> <p>PP = Program Planner SSAS = Student Self-Assessment Survey FAR = Assessment Conference & Final Assessment Report</p>			

MASTER OF ARTS TWO-YEAR PROGRAM PLANNER

Minimum Credit Requirement: 51 credits

CORE REQUIREMENTS

BIBLE [7-8 cr.]

- BX 101: 4 cr. and
 _____: 3 cr. (OT, NT, BX)

Except Bible Concentrators Must Take:

- OT 101: 4 cr. and
 NT 101: 4 cr.

HISTORY [5-6 cr.]

- CH 101: 3 cr. and
 _____: 2-3 cr.

Except History Concentrators Must Take:

- CH 107: 2 cr. and
 CH 108: 2 cr. and
 CH 109: 2 cr. and

THEOLOGY [6 cr.]

- ST 103 or ST 104: 3 cr. and
 _____: 3 cr. (PR, CE, ST)

INTERRELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT [3 cr.]

- _____: 3 cr.

GENERAL ELECTIVES [8-9 cr.]

- _____: ___ cr.
 _____: ___ cr.
 _____: ___ cr.
 _____: ___ cr.

CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

CONCENTRATION: _____

ADVANCED COURSES [15 cr.]

- _____: ___ cr.
 _____: ___ cr.
 _____: ___ cr.
 _____: ___ cr.
 _____: ___ cr.

THESIS AND LANGUAGE

- Thesis: 6 cr. and
 Modern Language Exam [no cr.]

STUDENT: _____

FIRST YEAR * FALL TERM

Course Number	Title	Credits

January

FIRST YEAR * SPRING TERM

Course Number	Title	Credits

Summer

SECOND YEAR * FALL TERM

Course Number	Title	Credits

January

SECOND YEAR * SPRING TERM

Course Number	Title	Credits

Summer

SIGN HERE:

Student: _____

Advisor: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B: CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS — MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE

Master of Arts (MA) degree program goals five, six, and seven and their corresponding learning outcomes relate to a specialized competency. Goal five is designed to enable students “to attain competency in the student’s chosen concentration in preparation for further graduate studies, teaching, or for application public, organizational, and non-academic contexts.” Information about MA program concentration is given below.

At the end of the first semester of study, MA students declare a concentration. The following concentrations have been approved by the faculty:

- I. Bible, with a specialization in Old Testament or New Testament or Cross Testaments
- II. Theology
- III. History
- IV. Interreligious Engagement
- V. Practical Theology, including (a) church/religion and society; (b) psychology and religion; and (c) preaching, arts, and worship
- VI. Interdisciplinary, including (a) performance, arts, and ritual or (b) another interdisciplinary theme to be developed in consultation with the director of the MA program (the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs) and the faculty advisor.

Concentrations should reflect and contribute to students’ ongoing intellectual, professional, and personal development at Union Theological Seminary.

Minimum credits required for a concentration

Students will complete at least 15 credits in a concentration. Courses counted toward other requirements cannot be counted again toward a concentration (e.g., ST 103 cannot count both toward the theology core distribution requirement and toward a theology concentration). Courses counted toward the concentration are normally at the advanced level (200 and above). At least half of a student’s concentration credits should be taken at Union, with exceptions subject to approval by both the faculty advisor and the Academic Dean, occasioned by very unusual circumstances. Courses counted toward the concentration must be taken for full credit, not as an audit or for R-credit. If the student is writing a thesis, normally, the thesis will be related to the concentration. Students’ concentrations will be recorded on their transcripts.

Descriptions of concentrations, including any specific requirements:

I. Bible, with a specialization in Old Testament or New Testament

This concentration is primarily intended for students preparing to teach, or as partial preparation for potential doctoral study. It gives students the initial ancient and modern language skills, introduction to academic study of the Bible, and specialized experience in

interpretation needed for further doctoral-level study of the Bible, or possible teaching of the Bible in religiously-affiliated secondary schools.

Prerequisites (or preferred background):

No prerequisites. Ideal to have a substantial historical-critical introduction to either or both Testaments and/or formal language training in Greek and/or biblical Hebrew.

Requirements:

For OT Bible Research Concentration:

- OT 101 and NT 101 for introductory 7-8 credits of Bible (or substitute Bible electives if the field approves). These courses will count toward the core distribution requirements.
- At least three courses in biblical languages, at least two of which must be biblical Hebrew (for preparation for doctoral applications: five courses are recommended, three in Hebrew and two in Greek)
- At least three electives in Bible, two of which should be exegetical in nature (focused on a book or block of text in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible).
- In addition, RE 319 Teaching Theology and Religion is recommended.

For NT Bible Research Concentration:

- OT 101 and NT 101 for introductory 7-8 credits of Bible (or substitute 7 credits of Bible electives if the field approves). These courses will count toward the core distribution requirements.
- At least three courses in biblical languages, at least two of which must be biblical Greek (for preparation for doctoral applications: five courses are recommended, three in Greek and two in Hebrew)
- At least three electives in Bible, two of which should be exegetical in nature (focused on a book or block of text in the New Testament).
- In addition, RE 319 Teaching Theology and Religion is recommended.

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

Students must write a thesis on a topic chosen in consultation with an advisor in their subdiscipline (e.g., Old Testament or New Testament). Theses will be graded on the extent to which they develop a compelling and focused argument for a thesis, integrating language knowledge appropriately and demonstrating excellent knowledge of and engagement with relevant secondary literature.

II. Theology

This concentration is intended for students who are planning to pursue advanced studies, to teach, or to work in applied contexts that require or would be enriched by basic knowledge and competency in theological disciplines.

Prerequisites (or preferred background):

Students who wish to pursue a theology concentration must obtain faculty advisor approval of a theology concentration proposal and submit same to the Registrar, together with a declaration form signed by the advisor, no later than December 15th of the student's first semester.

Requirements and Recommendations:

The number of credits to be allocated to each sub-discipline (e.g., social ethics, philosophy of religion, systematic theology) should be included in the student's concentration proposal and developed in consultation with the faculty advisor and with faculty in the pertinent sub-disciplines.

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

To be developed in consultation with the student's advisors and faculty in the theology field.

III. History

This concentration is aimed at those students who come to Union intending to deepen their knowledge of and reflection upon the historical processes that have shaped the Christian churches. Many, though not all of those students, will consider applying for doctoral study in history in a context either of seminary theological education, religious studies, or religious history as practiced in history departments. The MA program should begin to deepen their knowledge of various fields and assist in identifying a specialization. It should also offer opportunities to acquire skills, in the evaluation of primary sources, in the use of languages, and in the comparing and contrasting of analytical arguments and theories as applied to historical questions. These skills will be assessed in an integrated way throughout all courses in the curriculum.

Prerequisites (or preferred background):

Students wishing to make a concentration in history will normally take CH 107, CH 108 and CH 109. CH 101 will not normally be taken by a student wishing to concentrate in history.

Requirements and Recommendations:

Students wishing to make a concentration in history will take a core of fifteen (15) credits of history-related courses (200-level or higher). Concentrators will elect two historical periods in which to focus their studies: (a) Ancient, (b) Reformation and Early Modern, and (c) Modern Christianity, and other historical studies. Students should choose one period as the major area and one as the minor area. Nine credits of the concentration will normally be taken in the major area and six in the minor. Students of the Ancient Church concentration will usually take a course in biblical exegesis as part of the nine “major” credits. Students with a major concentration in Reformation and Early Modern, or Modern Christianity, and other historical studies, will be expected to take a relevant course outside the field. A consultation with the professor who teaches in the major area where the student intends to declare a concentration is required before a final selection of courses.

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

Students who concentrate in history will be expected to write a thesis according to the rubrics and guidelines specified for MA thesis across the seminary. Additionally, it will be expected that a thesis in history should demonstrate an effective grasp and deployment of primary sources drawn from the records of the period, movement or historical process to be studied. Where appropriate, students should expect to know and demonstrate use of the relevant ancient and/or biblical languages, and also modern scholarship in languages other than English, where this is essential to achieve the objectives of the thesis.

IV. Interreligious Engagement

This concentration is intended for students who are planning to pursue advanced studies, to teach, or to work in applied contexts that require competency in interreligious engagement. The concentration seeks to cultivate in students a combination of (1) knowledge in a tradition other than their own, (2) theoretical competence in key questions of interreligious engagement in areas such as theology of religious diversity, theory of religion, and comparative theology, and (3) competence in the practice of comparison across traditions.

Prerequisites (or preferred background):

There are no prerequisites. At least two undergraduate or graduate courses in a tradition other than the student’s own is desirable, as is experience in interreligious dialogue.

Requirements and Recommendations:

Students will be asked to take coursework in three broad areas: comparison (e.g. “Love Meets Wisdom,” “Hindu-Christian Dialogue”), theory and methods (e.g. “Interrogating Religion,”), and tradition-specific courses (e.g. “Qur’an: Engaging a Sacred Text,”

“Socially Engaged Buddhism”). As part of this, IE students will be required to take at least two courses in traditions other than their own.

Students are required to take IE 102 (“Religions in the City”). A student may petition the Academic Dean for an exemption from this requirement if the student, prior to entering Union, has taken two or more undergraduate or graduate courses on traditions other than Christianity and has earned a B average in those courses. In addition, RE 319 Teaching Theology and Religion is recommended if students anticipate teaching.

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

Students must write a thesis in interreligious engagement on a topic chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field). Theses will be graded on the extent to which they develop a compelling and focused argument for a thesis, and demonstrate a high degree of knowledge of and engagement with relevant primary texts (as appropriate to the topic) and secondary literature.

V. Practical Theology, including church and society; psychology and religion; preaching, arts, and worship

A. Church/Religion and Society

This concentration is intended for students interested in the intersectionality of church/religion and society. The role of church/religion in relation to structures of oppression and struggles of liberation constitutes the main focus of our work in church/religion and society. The impact of religion in personal, socio-political, spiritual, and ecological dimensions of those structures and struggles will be explored. The intersection of religion and the social sciences are an indispensable part of this study. The religious and denominational diversity of the students, including racial/ethnic/gender/sexual/economic class, will be a resource for learning and a strength of this program. This concentration strongly emphasizes the belief that theory should respond to human experience and that academic scholarship must address contemporary issues. Sociological theories of religion and theological studies will be a focus of this concentration. Students who choose this concentration will develop strong analytical skills with regard to sociological analyses of religion, as well as competencies in writing and conducting research. The City of New York offers fertile ground for the study of religion, and students will be uniquely positioned to make use of an abundance of available resources. Achievement of learning outcome in the course will be assessed by evaluating the contents of the student’s e-Portfolio, considering course evaluations contained in the student’s transcript and grading the student’s thesis or thesis project.

Prerequisites (or preferred background):

Undergraduate coursework in sociology, religious studies and/or professional experience in church/religious work.

Requirements and Recommendations:

Students are required to take 15 CS credits:

CS 230 Contemporary Theories of the Sociology of Religion

CS 335/IE 335 African Religions in the Americas

CS 343 Major Thinkers in the Sociology of Religion: Marx/Engels, Weber, Durkheim and Dubois

CS 262 Methods in the Study of Urban Life and Religion

CS 311 A Prophetic Pastoral Theology in the City

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

The thesis will facilitate a more thorough development of a topic of interest relevant to the intersectionality of church/religion and society (i.e. poverty, gentrification, race/racism, gender, church growth, marginalized religions and immigration).

Historical context for student's chosen specializations will be fostered. The thesis will assist students to make use of sociological theories of religion acquired in their course work in conjunction with qualitative methodology. The thesis should deepen student's understanding of current religious beliefs and practices, generating broader awareness of the multifaceted, bidirectional impact of these upon the lived realities of individuals and communities.

B. Psychology and Religion

This concentration is intended for students with a strong interest in pursuing a deeper understanding of a dialogue/integration between psychoanalytic theory and religion (with Christian and Jewish roots, but also embracing the study of the religious and philosophical roots of a range of spiritual traditions). As a concentration in an academic master's degree, this program is neither a clinical training program for counseling licensure, nor an empirical religious studies research program. The focus is theoretical and theological. Psychology and religion concentrators will develop the ability to deploy in their research, writing, and chosen professional or advanced academic contexts the basic content, perspectives, and analytical tools of both psychoanalytic theory and theology, with an accent on the student's own religious tradition, and to bring the disciplines of psychology and theology into fruitful intellectual dialogue. All students will become familiar with foundational models for both theory and practice.

Achievement of learning outcomes will be assessed in the course of evaluating the contents of the student's ePortfolio, course evaluations contained in the student's

transcript and in the grading of the student's thesis or thesis project and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) evaluation from a minimum of one basic unit.

Examples of contexts in which this degree concentration could be deployed include, but are not limited to the following: spiritual care specialist or consultant (non-ordained) in congregational settings; consultant to faith-based nonprofit and community organizations; further graduate work in pastoral counseling, clinical counseling, social work, or psychoanalytic training; further graduate work toward lay chaplaincy certification; advanced Clinical Pastoral Education training; researcher in faith-based institutions.

Prerequisites (or preferred background):

Undergraduate coursework in psychology and/or professional experience in mental health services is desirable but not required.

Requirements and Recommendations (*21 credits broken down as follows*):

PS 415 Readings in Psychoanalysis: From Object Relations to Relationality is normally the foundational course and will be offered every year. It is the prerequisite for further psychoanalytic theory courses, culminating in a thesis.

PS 415 should therefore be taken in the Fall of the first year if possible. **All** Psychology & Religion concentrators are required to take PS 110 and one basic unit of CPE in order to understand theory and pastoral theology from within a supervised practice experience. Students should add their CPE evaluations to their ePortfolios as soon as possible after completing CPE.

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

The thesis will be tailored to each student's individual vocational and academic goals. Every thesis should show a strong and equal understanding of the historical foundations, concepts, and methods of both (1) a specific psychological theory and (2) a chosen theology/faith tradition. The thesis should make an argument for a thoughtful integration and critical correlation of both (1) and (2) in relation to the student's specialized area of interest.

C. Preaching, Arts, and Worship

The MA Concentration in Preaching, Worship, and the Arts is intended for students pursuing interdisciplinary work related to the practices of religion and worship. The concentration prepares individuals for professions involving public religious leadership. The work within this concentration emphasizes theological frameworks and methods related to practices of worship and ritual, preaching and other forms of public interpretive discourse, and the role of the creative arts in these practices.

Prerequisites (or preferred background):

Students who choose the Preaching, Worship, and the Arts concentration are expected to have interests in vocations involving public religious leadership or an interest in future academic studies related to preaching, worship, and the arts.

Requirements and Recommendations (15 credits total):

- An introductory course in Preaching and Worship (at 200-level or above)– 3 credits
- Three (3) additional courses – 9 credits -- in the area of worship, homiletics, and the arts
- One (1) course chosen for the concentration in consultation with the faculty advisor – 3 credits

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

Individuals must submit a written thesis that critically engages practices of religion and theology as they relate to worship, homiletics, and the arts. The thesis will be evaluated based on the following:

- the clarity of its argument and organization of the argument's development,
- the ability to demonstrate a connection between theological narratives and religious practices, and
- a connection to the ongoing study and practice of worship, preaching, and the arts

VI. Interdisciplinary, including theology and the arts or another interdisciplinary theme to be developed in consultation with the director of the MA program (the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs) and the faculty advisor.

Students declaring an interdisciplinary concentration must write a rationale, which will include a description of the concentration, how it relates to their academic and vocational goals, and a list of courses relevant to the concentration.

A. Performance, Arts, and Ritual

The MA Concentration in Performance, Arts, and Ritual is intended for students pursuing the interdisciplinary work of performance (speaking, acting, dancing, music, and other forms of art-making) in the public sphere through the lens of religion. The concentration prepares students both for ministries in the arts in congregations, as well as work in non-profits and other communities where the arts are a vital component of building just communities. This work emphasizes the connection of the arts with ritual performance in light of an understanding that the arts are a primary way of acting in the world. Within the concentration, students may pursue such topics as ritual, performance and border

theories, the arts in worship, the arts within communities, artistic performative practices, improvisation and interreligious dialogue.

Prerequisites (or preferred background):

Students who choose the Performance, Arts, and Ritual concentration are expected to have a background in the arts and be proficient in some art form prior to beginning the MA degree.

Requirements and Recommendations (15 credits total):

1. An introductory course in Preaching and Worship (at 200 level or above)– 3 credits
2. Three (3) additional courses – 9 credits, including either, two (2) speaking/homiletics courses and one (1) worship/ritual/art or, one (1) speaking/homiletics course and two (2) worship/ritual/arts courses
3. One (1) course chosen for the concentration in consultation with the faculty advisor – 3 credits

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

A thesis engaging the arts that may be either entirely written or a project/performance with written component. The thesis will be evaluated based on the following:

- the clarity of its argument and organization of the argument's development,
- the ability to demonstrate a connection between theological narratives and religious practices, and
- a connection to the ongoing study and practice of worship, preaching, and the arts

B. Other Interdisciplinary

This concentration is intended for students who are planning to pursue advanced studies, to teach, or to work in applied contexts that require or would be enriched by basic knowledge and competency in multiple academic disciplines. Interdisciplinary concentrators will develop the ability to deploy in their research, writing, and chosen professional or advanced academic contexts the basic content, perspectives, and analytical tools of two or more theological disciplines or of at least one theological and one non-theological discipline. Achievement of this interdisciplinary learning outcome will be assessed in the course of evaluating the contents of the student's ePortfolio, course evaluations contained in the student's transcript, and in the grading of the student's thesis or thesis project. Students who choose this concentration may cluster their advanced interdisciplinary courses and focus their interdisciplinary research around the history, theology, practices, and concerns of a particular group, community, or sector

of society or around a particular issue or problem that affects multiple groups or is of global significance.

Examples of possible interdisciplinary concentrations include, but are not limited to the following: Theology (or Worship) and the Arts; Womanist Theology and Ecological Ethics; Church & Society and the Law; The Bible and Social Justice; Psychology, Religion and the Ethics of Incarceration; etc.

Concentration Prerequisites (or preferred background):

Students who wish to pursue an Interdisciplinary concentration must seek and obtain faculty advisor approval of an interdisciplinary concentration proposal and the Associate Academic Dean (director of the MA program) and must submit the proposal to the registrar, together with a declaration form signed by the advisor, no later than December 15th of the student's first semester.

Requirements and Recommendations:

Students are required to take fifteen (15) advanced course credits in their areas of interdisciplinary concentration. The number of credits to be allocated to each discipline should be included in the student's concentration proposal and developed in consultation with the faculty advisor and with faculty in the pertinent disciplines.

Thesis/Project Requirements, Guidelines, and Grading Criteria:

To be developed in consultation with the student's advisors and faculty in pertinent fields.



Appendix C1

Cross-Registration - Theological Courses

Union Theological Seminary

Registrar

Overview:

Union Theological Seminary students intending to take a course at a school participating in the below agreements are required to complete this form. Data is shared with the registrar at the host institution. Once approved and entered by the registrar, the course will be applied to your Union record and available on your class schedule via the [SSO](#).

Students are limited to one course per semester, and the following number of total credits, at institutions within the consortium:

- Master of Arts: 12 credits
- Master of Divinity: 15 credits
- Master of Sacred Theology: 6 credits
- Doctor of Philosophy (except Bible): 12 credits

NY Theological Consortium Partner Schools:

- Fordham University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education
- The General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church
- Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
- Jewish Theological Seminary
- New York Theological Seminary
- St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary

Drew University Theological School:

- Union students are permitted to take courses in the areas of United Methodist history, theology, and polity and other courses specifically related to the life and ministry of The United Methodist Church.

Graduating students taking courses at an above school their final spring semester

You must notify the instructor that you are graduating and request that your final grade be submitted to the Registrar's Office on or before Union's deadline for final grades for graduating students.

Dates/Deadlines:



Powered by Formstack [Create your own form >](#)

- April 30 for Summer 2018
- July 15 for Fall 2018
- November 30 for Spring 2019

Instructions:

1. Select "Next" to make sure the form was completed in its entirety.
2. The Academic Advisor Approval page should appear. Select the "Save and Resume Later" link.
3. Select "Save and get link" when the window opens.
4. Copy the provided URL of the completed form and paste it in an email to your academic advisor copying the Dean.
5. Email the URL to your advisor requesting they complete their portion of this form.
6. After signed and dated, the advisor should complete steps 2-5 above to send to the Dean.
7. Share the below instructions with advisor and Dean when emailing the URL.

Advisor Instructions:

1. Open the email link sent by the student which displays their completed portion of the form.
2. Select "Next" to complete the advisor portion.
3. More instructions exist in that approval portions of the form.

Student Information

Name *

First Name

Last Name

Email *

UNI *

Date of Birth *

Phone *

Address *

City



State

ZIP Code

Degree Program *

M.A.

M.Div.

M.Div./M.S.S.W

S.T.M.

D.Min.

Ph.D.

How many credits have you previously taken in other schools that you plan to count toward degree requirements at Union? *

Maximum allowed: M.Div., 12 credits; M.A., 9 credits; S.T.M., 6 credits; Ph.D., 12 credits (except Bible students)

Academic Advisor Name *

First Name

Last Name

Academic Advisor Email *

@uts.columbia.edu

How will taking this course contribute to your program at Union? *

1000/1000

Course Information



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Host Institution *

The General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

Jewish Theological Seminary

New York Theological Seminary

St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary

Fordham University

Drew Theological

Have you previously taken a course at one of the theological schools listed above? *

Yes

No

Term/Year *

(Select One)

Course Number *

Title *

Credits *

Instructor Name *

First Name

Last Name

Instructor Approval *

I have secured email permission from the instructor, and have forwarded/will forward to registrar@utsnyc.edu.

I have not secured permission, but have contacted the instructor and am waiting for a response.

Code of Conduct *

I acknowledge that I will abide by the code of



Student Sign and Date

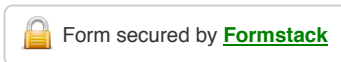
My electronic signature below acknowledges that I will abide by the code of conduct at the host institution. By entering my signature and date below, I authorize the host institution to release my academic transcript to the consortium coordinator at my home institution (Union Theological Seminary) after the final grade has been posted to my record. I grant the consortium coordinator at the home and host institutions permission to release, disclose, and discuss pertinent records and information in their possession, with each other.

Signature *

Date *

[Save and Resume Later](#)





Appendix C2

Cross-Registration - at Columbia University

Union Theological Seminary
Registrar

Overview:

Union Theological Seminary students intending to take a course at Columbia University (CU) are required to complete this form. Courses that are available for cross-registration begin with the letters G, R, U, or W and must be at the 3000 level or higher. Data is shared with the registrar at CU for proper data entry and course registration. Once approved and entered by the registrar, the CU course will be applied to your Union record and available on your class schedule via the [SSO](#).

Graduating students taking CU courses their final spring semester:

You must notify the instructor that you are a graduating student and request that your final grade be submitted to the registrar's office on or before Union's grading deadline for graduating students.

Dates/Deadlines:

- Fall 2018 *Cross-Registration Forms* were due by **July 15, 2018**.
- Spring 2019 *Cross-Registration Forms* are due by **November 30, 2018**

1. Complete the form in its entirety and follow the below steps to obtain your advisor's approval.
2. Select the "Save and Resume Later" at the bottom of the form.
3. Copy the provided URL of the completed form and paste it into an email to the advisor.
4. Email the URL to your advisor requesting they complete their portion of the form. Save a copy of the URL as this is the only way to access the form in progress.
5. Share the below instructions with the faculty when emailing the URL.

Advisor Instructions:

1. Open the email link sent by the student which contains their completed form.
2. Select "Next" to approve/sign and date.
3. Select "Submit Form" to send to registrar.

Student Information



First Name

Last Name

Date of Birth *



Degree Program *

 M.A. M.Div. M.Div./M.S.S.W S.T.M. D.Min. Ph.D.

UNI *

Phone *

Address *

City

State

ZIP Code

How many credits have you previously taken in other schools that you plan to count toward degree requirements at Union? *

Maximum allowed: M.Div., 12 credits; M.A., 9 credits; S.T.M., 6 credits; Ph.D., 12 credits (except Bible students)



First Name

Last Name

Course Information

Term/Year *

Course Number *

Only courses beginning with the letters G, R, U or W courses at 3000 level or higher are permitted per the agreement.

Title *

Credits *

Call Number *

Unique 5-digit number assigned to each CU course that is required for registration.

Instructor Name *

First Name

Last Name

Instructor Approval *

I have secured email permission from the instructor and have forwarded/will forward to registrar@utsnyc.edu.

I have contacted the instructor for permission and am waiting for a response.

I have not yet contacted the instructor for permission, but I will do so and will forward to registrar@utsnyc.edu

How will taking this course contribute to your program at Union? *



1000/1000

Student Sign and Date

Signature *

Date *



[Save and Resume Later](#)



 Form secured by [Formstack](#)



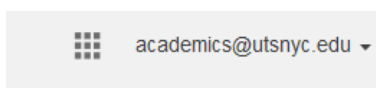
Appendix D

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR ePORTFOLIO

Every UTS student has an ePortfolio: a folder created by the Academic Office. That folder lives in the student's Google Drive associated with her or his utsnyc.edu email address (not the Drive connected to any personal Gmail account). If you cannot access your ePortfolio after following these instructions, contact Chris McFadden at cmcfadden@utsnyc.edu or write to academics@utsnyc.edu for assistance.

To access your Google Drive, go to your utsnyc.edu email inbox. In the upper right hand corner of the screen there is an icon of nine small squares. Float your mouse over the icon to see "Google Apps" icon.

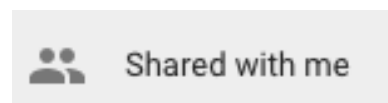


Click on the "Google Apps" icon. A menu of apps will appear including the Google Drive icon.



Click on the Drive icon. Your list of Google Drive folders is displayed.

On the left of this screen, click on the folder named "Shared with me."



Look for your ePortfolio in the "Shared with me" folder. The folder is named like this:

[Your degree] ePortfolio - (2017) LastName, FirstName - ab1234
(your entering year) your name - your UNI)

Click on the ePortfolio folder to open the contents of your ePortfolio.

How to Upload a Document to Your ePortfolio

Click on your ePortfolio to open it. In the upper-left corner of the screen, find the "NEW" button. Click the "NEW" button, and click "File upload" from the pull-down menu. Browse for and select your file. In a few moments, an upload status box will say "1 upload complete" and you're done! Your uploaded file will be shared automatically with your Assessment team.



Please follow this **Naming Convention** for academic work files uploaded to the ePortfolio:

Last Name First Name Course # Instructor Name Genre/title; for example, *Bidlack, Beth NT101 Niang Exegetical Paper (or Revelation Paper)*

You may access your ePortfolio at any time.

Warning for device users:

If you are using Gmail in a web browser on a device such as a smartphone or tablet, you may not have access to Google Apps (you won't see the Google Apps square icon in your inbox). If you download the free Google Drive app for your device and sign in to your UNI Gmail account, you can access your Drive and ePortfolio directly.

Appendix E

M.A. Thesis Proposal

Important Information & Instructions

Master of Arts students graduating in May are required to complete a thesis.

1. The student obtains the approval of the faculty members who agree to serve as thesis advisor/first reader and second reader. Note: A thesis advisor is not necessarily the same professor who serves as the student’s program advisor, but the first reader must be a full-time faculty member.
2. The subject of the thesis is determined with the readers, and the Thesis Proposal Template on the Registrar's webpage should be used to facilitate conversations.
3. Once faculty readers agree and a subject is determined, the student completes this form and sends to the readers for approval. Recommended order for the webform to operate properly, is as follows:
 1. Student sends to first reader.
 2. First reader sends to second reader.
 3. Second reader submits to registrar.
4. Once approved, the student submits the form to the Registrar by **December 1**.
5. Once completed and submitted to the faculty, the student also deposits a copy into their ePortfolio.

Guidelines for writing a thesis are available on [this portion](#) of the Registrar's webpage. See the [Academic Calendar](#) for other deadlines during the thesis process.

Student Name *

First Name

Last Name

Student Email *

Select one to populate appropriate portions of the form *

I am completing a Thesis and details are below

I am not graduating this May



Powered by Formstack Create your own form >

This form is due to the Registrar's Office by December 1.

[Save and Resume Later](#)

Submit Form



Powered by Formstack Create your own form >