



UNION

2020 - 2021

**Master of Arts
Academic Program Guide**

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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.

CORE VALUES

Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, founded in 1836, is a historically progressive Christian seminary with increasing commitment to interreligious engagement and spirituality. Our mission is encapsulated by the phrase: “where faith and scholarship meet to reimagine the work of justice.” This quest for justice is broad and includes social justice and activism, responsive care for communities and individuals, the pursuit of collective well-being, and of human and planetary flourishing. In particular, exploring the religious and spiritual dimensions of this quest defines our distinctive mission.

These commitments have allowed defining of “core values” that express this mission and guide our teaching and learning. They are what we aim to teach our students:

- To grasp the substance of the Christian tradition and the other primary traditions of students through the study of scripture/sacred texts, theology, history, and tradition-specific practices
- To be in continued dialogue with other religious traditions on those traditions’ own terms and to dialogue with the spiritually non-affiliated with respect and care
- To develop the ability to theologically engage the human quest for meaning and spiritual connection
- To develop the capacity for self-reflection as well as the capacity to respond to others in ways that are compassionate and open-hearted
- To develop capacities for critical analysis of the ecological, social, and cultural systems in which persons, communities, and traditions exist, recognizing that spiritual and religious beliefs and practices are expressed in ways determined by conditions of time and place
- To cultivate a theological understanding of the earth and its diverse ecosystems in a manner that fosters an informed commitment to planetary well-being and justice
- To form a secure base for both ethical decision-making and spiritual wisdom in service to the needs of the world
- To educate impassioned, informed, and wise leaders and community members capable of engaging the pressing issues of our day with integrity and courage

Developed and approved by the faculty in academic year 2019-2020

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

The Master of Arts (MA) is designed as a two-year, full-time program. The purpose of this academic degree is to prepare students for “graduate study of one or more theologically related disciplines” that enrich students’ work in their chosen professions (*ATS Standard 4.7*). While this is primarily an academic degree that prepares students for advanced studies and teaching, the MA 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 Master of Arts has clearly articulated student learning outcomes appropriate to a graduate theological degree (including concentrations) and is consistent with Union's mission and resources. As an academically oriented degree, a thesis is required as the capstone research project. (*ATS Standard 4.9*)

The program goals identified 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 demonstrate upon successfully completion the program. Graduates of the Master of Arts degree should be well equipped to apply their learning in contemporary contexts both within and beyond academia.

Goal One: To develop a broad and critical understanding of the Bible as foundation of the Christian traditions, and for Buddhism and Interreligious Engagement or Islam and Interreligious Engagement concentrators, a broad and critical understanding of their respective sacred texts/interpretations; to engage in and interpret exegetically-informed and contextually-sensitive Bible/sacred texts in historical, literary, contemporary global, and multi-religious contexts; to demonstrate the capacity to establish connections between the Bible and other sacred texts.

Learning Outcome: Successful completion of courses in Bible: Cross-Testament (**BX**), Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (**OT**), New Testament (**NT**); and/or Sacred Texts (**STX**); and other relevant evidence (such as sermons or other worship).

Goal Two: To demonstrate the capacity to: understand and reflect on the Christian tradition within the context of one's own culture through cultural, religious, and moral pluralism, including consideration of relativism and dialogue with science; to identify and describe the concepts involved in the basic doctrines of Christian faith and show connections between them; to understand classic and contemporary methods of moral decision-making.

Learning Outcome: Successful completion of courses in Theological Studies (**TS**), Social Ethics (**SE**), Philosophy of Religion (**PR**), and/or Anglican Studies (**AS**); and other relevant evidence.

Goal Three: To demonstrate knowledge of historical events and developments that gave rise to diverse forms of Christianity; to use historical techniques to analyze and understand how inherited beliefs and faiths are expressed and lived conditioned by the circumstances of time and place; to demonstrate how cultural context shapes stories that people of faith share about themselves and their communities.

Learning Outcome: Successful completion of Church History/Historical Studies (**CH**) courses and other relevant evidence.

Goal Four: To demonstrate the capacity to learn about and from diverse religious traditions on their own terms; and the capacity to engage in sustained self-reflection and acknowledgment of one's own assumptions when encountering manifestations of religious diversity.

Learning Outcome: Successful completion of Interreligious Engagement (**IE**) courses and other relevant evidence.

Goal Five: To gain knowledge and critical awareness of existing power dynamics and structures in terms of gender, sexuality, race, class, and identities targeted for oppression, and how they shape theology, ethics, history and other forms of theological engagement; to effectively and constructively engage the world's serious issues such as racial and sexual/gender injustice, mass incarceration, and the climate crisis, in ways informed by deep theological, historical, and critical study; to build theological, theoretical, critical, and contextually accountable foundations for the study of religious communities, movements, and societies.

Learning Outcome: Successful completion of Social Ethics (**SE**), Religion and Society (**RS**), Field Education (**FE**), and other direct relevant evidence (recognizing that all of Union's curriculum addresses this goal in some way).

Goal Six: 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 Outcome: Successful completion of a minimum of fifteen credits in a concentration as identified by a field, or combination of fields as an interdisciplinary concentration.

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

Learning Outcome: Successful completion of a critically and constructively written scholarly thesis.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Master of Arts degree requires that students complete a minimum of fifty-one (51) credits. Students are permitted to exceed the minimum requirements of the degree. All MA students acquire broad and basic knowledge and academic skills by taking a common core of courses in the "classical" theological disciplines of *Bible*, *Church History/Historical Studies*, and *Theology and 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*, *Arts and Worship (CW)*, *Communication Arts (CA)*, *Religion and Education (RE)*, *Psychology and Religion (PS)*, *Religion and Society (RS)*, and other *Practical Theology (PT)* courses.

In addition to the degree requirements outlined above, MA students are required to take a minimum of fifteen (15) credits to pursue a concentration (see appropriate section below). MA students are also required to complete a thesis, and participation of the two-semester thesis seminar is strongly encouraged.

Beginning with academic year 2020-21, MA students are not required to pass a modern language exam, but successful completion of an exam in either French, German, or Spanish is recommended for further academic study. Courses in French, German, and Spanish are offered each Fall semester. Exams in these languages are offered twice each semester (Fall and Spring). SU 185-*Spanish for Latinx Ministry* is offered every other Spring.

Credit Distribution Requirements

The following chart outlines the requirements for the degree including core and concentration distribution:

MASTER OF ARTS CREDIT DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS	
	Number of Credits Required
CORE	
Bible/Sacred Texts	7-8
Church History/Historical Studies	5-6
Theology and Ethics	6
Interreligious Engagement	3
CONCENTRATION	
Advanced courses (level 200+)	15
Thesis	6
GENERAL ELECTIVES	8-9
TOTAL CREDITS (minimum)	51

Course Load and Planning

Students are not permitted to take more than fifteen (15) credits in any one semester or more than thirty (30) credits in an academic year, exclusive of the January intersession and/or Summer terms, unless with 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.

Some legitimate reasons may exist for not being able to complete the degree in two years. Financial or family obligations, or special educational needs, may result in the need to spread the degree over three or four years. Decisions about the duration of the program should be made in consultation with the faculty advisor and director of financial aid. There are federal regulations that Union has a responsibility to follow when administering federal student loans. Additionally, the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy, especially the maximum time to completion, should be carefully reviewed as documented in the academic catalogue.

The degree planner (see Appendix A) lists required courses and credit distribution requirements within a format 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 this periodically.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Core Field Requirements

Bible [7-8 credits]:

- Students must take a minimum of 7 credits, consisting of BX 101-*Introduction to the Bible* and a 3-credit course in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (OT), New Testament (NT), or Cross-Testament (BX).
- Bible concentrators are required to fulfill this core requirement with OT 101-*Introduction to the Old Testament* and NT 101-*Introduction to the New Testament* for a total of 8 credits.

Church History/Historical Studies [5-6 credits]:

- Students must take a minimum of 5 credits consisting of CH 101-*Christianity in Historical Perspective* and a 2- or 3-credit course in this field.
- History concentrators are required to fulfill this core requirement with CH 107-*Introduction to Christian History: The First Millennium*, CH 108-*The History of Christianity: Western European Church History c.1000-c.2000*, and CH 109-*History of Christianity Since Reformation* for a total of 6 credits.

Interreligious Engagement [3 credits]:

- The 3-credit minimum may be satisfied with any course in this field.

Theology and Ethics [6 credits]:

- Students must take a minimum of 6 credits. The introductory requirement can be either TS 101-*Foundations in Christian Theology* or TS 103-*Critical Perspectives in Modern Theology* or TS 104-*Introduction to Systematic Theology*.
- The upper-level requirement must be a 3-credit course in Philosophy of Religion (PR), Social Ethics (SE), or Theological Studies (TS).

Practical Theology [3 credits recommended]:

- Students are encouraged to take one or more PT courses among their general electives.

A summary of fields and associated course subject codes is as follows:

Bible/Sacred Text: Cross-Testament (BX), Old Testament (OT), New Testament (NT), Sacred Text (STX)

Church History/Historical Studies: Church History/Historical Studies (CH), Denominational Studies (DS)

Interreligious Engagement: Interreligious Engagement (IE)

Practical Theology: Communication Arts (CA), Worship, Preaching, and Arts (CW), Psychology and Religion (PS), Practical Theology (PT), Religion and Education (RE), Religion and Society (RS)

Theology and Ethics: Philosophy of Religion (PR), Social Ethics (SE), Theological Studies (TS)

Concentration Requirements

Students are required to take a minimum of fifteen (15) credits in advanced (200-level or above) courses of their choosing within the area of their concentration. Normally, concentration courses should not be taken in a given field until that field's requirements have been met. A concentration allows students to focus studies in a particular field or in one of the faculty-approved program foci. 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.). To declare an interdisciplinary concentration, students must confer with the Assistant Dean for Academic Administration.

General Electives

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. Students not concentrating in a discipline within the practical theology field are not required, but are encouraged, to include one or more *Practical Theology* (PT) courses among their general electives.

Supplemental Co-Curricular Courses

Students may take Supplemental Co-Curricular (SU) courses that provide opportunities for spiritual and personal enrichment (SU 125 – *Introduction to Spiritual Formation*) and/or the acquisition of practical professional and ministerial skills (SU 190 – *Topics in Ministry*). Students may take as many SU courses as they wish **but only three SU credits count toward the general elective requirements.** Consult the academic catalogue for the 1-credit Supplemental Co-Curricular courses on various topics.

Guided Reading

Students may propose a guided reading for 1, 2, or 3 credits with approval and under the direction of a member of the faculty. Students must complete and submit a specific form found on this [webpage](#). View the full policy, including an established limit and deadlines, in the academic catalogue.

Cross-Registration

With approval of the faculty advisor and Academic Dean, Master of Arts students may take up to twelve (12) graduate-level 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: Fordham University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, General Theological Seminary, Hebrew Union College, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York Theological Seminary, and St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary
- *Columbia University*: Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, School of the Arts, and School of International and Public Affairs
- *Drew University Theological School*
- **Note:** *Columbia University Teacher's College* is not a partner school

Approved graduate courses within the *New York Theological Consortium* may be taken at no additional cost to Union students. Approved courses taken at *Columbia University* are subject to semesterly course fees. 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. Students who wish to take courses in *any* outside partner and non-partner school must submit a request first approved by the faculty advisor, then to the Academic Dean, then submitted to the Registrar. A minimum grade of B (or equivalent) must be earned for credit to be counted toward fulfillment of the Union degree. Students are expected to frequent this [webpage](#) for **complete cross-registration information including approval and registration process.**

Thesis Requirement

A formal thesis paper in the area of concentration is required. The thesis process begins early in the second year of the program with a proposal due in November. For instructions about the thesis including submission forms, visit the **Thesis & Final Project** portion of this [webpage](#). A two-semester thesis writing seminar (UT 150 and UT 151) is offered in a fall/spring sequence and is highly recommended. The thesis totals 6 credits: Either UT 150 and UT 151 for 1-credit each plus UT 420 (04) or UT 420 (06) without the year-long seminar.

ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

Consultation with faculty advisors takes 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 academic advisement that must occur prior to course registration.

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 academic advisement usually occurs during new student orientation in August.

Online course registration for the Fall of the second year of study normally takes place in April. Academic advisement in April is **required** to be in person. ***First-year students are required to complete degree planners with their faculty advisors at both the August advisement (for first Fall) and November advisement (for first Spring) sessions.*** Students are also expected to meet with their advisors to map out the second year of study. The student must deposit their approved degree audit into their ePortfolio (see appendix). ***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 the Spring semester normally takes place in November. First-year students are **required** to consult with their advisor prior to Spring course registration. It is highly recommended that this consultation be in person, but the student and advisor may agree to consult by phone, email, or video conference. ***Course registration for the first Spring semester remains blocked by a hold until the faculty advisor certifies to the Registrar that there was a meaningful academic advisement session.***

Second-year students are strongly encouraged, but 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.

A pre-graduation degree audit is completed with the academic office prior to Spring registration in the Fall semester. Beyond the required advisement sessions with faculty advisors, *all* faculty members, the Academic Dean, Assistant Dean, and senior administrative staff are ready and willing to offer advisement in their areas of expertise and competency.

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 (ATS standard 2.6). 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
2. to provide administration and faculty with a means 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 where evidence of their fulfillment of degree requirements and their learning achievement is collected and periodically reviewed. Students manage their ePortfolios through Google Drive affiliated with the @utsnyc.edu email (not accessible in personal Gmail accounts). See appendix for more information and 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. **Failure to submit required materials may result in a hold on your account, which prevents course registration, transcript requests, and receiving your diploma.**

Preliminary Documents – deposited one week before advisement at orientation

1. Entrance questionnaire – by Academic Office staff
2. Admissions essay – by Academic Office staff
3. Current résumé or CV as available/updated – by Academic Office staff or student
4. Approved degree planners – by student within one week after required advisement

Registrar's Documents – deposited by April 15 of second year

5. Unofficial transcript with narrative evaluations – by Academic Office staff

Academic Work – deposited by student by May 1 of second year

6. At least one assignment **with instructor comments** from each of the following fields, to demonstrate learning goals one through five (see above):
 - Bible (BX, OT, NT)
 - Church History/Historical Studies (CH)
 - Theology and Ethics (PR, SE, TS)
 - Interreligious Engagement (IE)
 - Practical Theology (CA, CW, PS, PT, RE, RS)
 - CPE evaluation – *Psychology & Religion concentrators*
7. Thesis proposal – by student by November deadline
8. Final thesis – by student by April deadline

The above documents must be deposited with *this naming convention:*

Last Name First Name Course # Instructor Name Genre>Title

(Example: McFadden Chris NT101 Niang Exegetical Paper/Revelation Paper)

Assessment Surveys and Reports

9. Student Self-Assessment Survey (SSAS) – deposited by student by May 1 of second year
10. Final Assessment Report (FAR) prepared by faculty advisor and student – deposited by Academic Office staff by June 15 of graduation year
11. Association of Theological Schools (ATS) Graduating Student Questionnaire – the assessment process *may* conclude with this questionnaire but Union does not participate every year

Notes on Assessment Process

Entrance Questionnaire: The assessment process begins with the Entrance Questionnaire (EQ) which includes a benchmark measure of a student's current competencies in the outcomes associated with the learning goals in one of the theological disciplines. During and at the end of the program, these competencies are revisited to see how far the student's learning and skills have progressed.

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

See the following two-year schedule and timeline for advising throughout the degree.

STUDENT-FACULTY ADVISEMENT & ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE			
	August/September	November	April
1 st year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> advisement for Fall DP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> advisement for Spring (hold) DP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> advisement for Fall DP
2 nd year	v advisement DP (if not registered in April)	v advisement at least once by end of Fall semester (pre-graduation degree audit)	SSAS due by May 1 FAR due by June 1
<p style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = advisement required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = advisement must be meaningful consultation (hold) = in place until advisor notifies Registrar of advisement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DP = Degree Planner SSAS = Student Self-Assessment Survey FAR = Faculty Final Assessment Report</p>			

CONCENTRATIONS

Master of Arts (MA) degree program goal six and the corresponding learning outcome relates to a specialized competency. Goal six is designed to enable students “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.” Information about program concentrations is below.

At the end of the second semester of study, students declare a concentration, even though the majority of advanced electives do not begin until the second year. This early declaration, in the first year, is intended to assist the seminary in curricular development and planning; to maximize from the outset the fruitfulness of individual student advisement, course, and career planning; and to allow sufficient lead-time for students to develop their thesis proposal.

The following concentrations have been approved by the faculty:

- Bible: Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, New Testament, Cross-Testament
- Buddhism and Interreligious Engagement
- Church History/Historical Studies
- Interreligious Engagement
- Islam and Interreligious Engagement
- Psychology and Religion
- Religion and Society
- Social Ethics
- Theological Studies
- Theology and the Arts
- Interdisciplinary

Concentrations should reflect and contribute to students’ ongoing intellectual, professional, and personal development at Union Theological Seminary. Students complete at least fifteen (15) credits in a concentration. Courses counted toward other requirements cannot be counted again toward a concentration (e.g., TS 103 cannot count both toward the theology core requirement and 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 audit or reading credit. A student's thesis is normally related to the declared concentration. Students' concentrations are recorded on their official transcripts. See below for each concentration including a description and specific requirements.

Bible

This concentration is primarily intended for students preparing to teach, or continue academic study of the Bible. Students are provided with initial ancient language skills, introduction to academic study of the Bible, and specialized experience in interpretation needed for further doctoral-level study, or possible teaching of the Bible in religiously-affiliated secondary schools. Students usually declare either Old Testament or New Testament concentration but a Cross-Testament focus is possible if the coursework and language requirement is spread across both Testaments.

Course Requirements

Old Testament Research:

- BX 101-*Introduction to the Bible* and OT 101-*Introduction to the Old Testament* **OR** OT 101-*Introduction to the Old Testament* and NT 101-*Introduction to the New Testament* as core requirements
- Three advanced courses in biblical Hebrew (for students preparing for doctoral study) – minimum 9 credits
- Two or more courses in Bible that are exegetical in nature (focused on a book or block of text in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible) – minimum 6 credits
- An advanced course in biblical Greek (or approved Hebrew substitution) recommended – minimum 3 credits
- RE 319-*Teaching Theology and Religion* recommended for students who anticipate teaching

New Testament Research:

- BX 101-*Introduction to the Bible* and NT 101-*Introduction to the New Testament* **OR** OT 101-*Introduction to the Old Testament* and NT 101-*Introduction to the New Testament* as core requirements
- Three or more advanced courses in biblical Greek (for students preparing for doctoral study) – minimum 9 credits
- Two or more courses in Bible that are exegetical in nature (focused on a book or block of text in the New Testament) – minimum 6 credits
- An advanced course in biblical Hebrew (or approved Greek substitution) recommended – minimum 3 credits
- RE 319-*Teaching Theology and Religion* recommended for students who anticipate teaching

Cross-Testament Research:

- BX 101-*Introduction to the Bible* **OR** OT 101-*Introduction to the Old Testament* and NT 101-*Introduction to the New Testament* as core requirements
- Three (or more) semesters of Biblical Hebrew and/or Biblical Greek – minimum 9 credits
- Two additional advanced courses in Bible (OT/NT/BX) – minimum 6 credits

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on a biblical topic in their subdiscipline (Hebrew Bible/Old Testament or New Testament or Cross-Testament) chosen in consultation with an advisor is required. Theses are graded on the extent to which they develop a compelling and focused argument, integrate language knowledge appropriately, and demonstrate excellent knowledge of and engagement with relevant secondary literature.

Buddhism and Interreligious Engagement

This concentration prepares students for diverse leadership roles with and in Buddhist communities as well as bringing Buddhist practices and principles to communities that may not identify as Buddhist. These roles include religious and spiritual leadership; teaching; and careers in interreligious/interfaith cooperation, policy-making, social justice advocacy, journalism, non-profits, and government.

Course Requirements

- Sacred Texts (STX) course in Buddhism plus an additional 3-credit STX/Bible upper-level course as core requirements
- A Buddhist history course as an additional core requirement
- Advanced interreligious engagement course in a tradition other than Buddhism or Christianity as a core requirement
- IE 234-*Buddhist Religious Thought* as an additional core requirement
- IE 221-*Introduction to Buddhist Meditation Practices*
- IE 240-*Socially Engaged Buddhism*
- Additional advanced BIE courses – minimum 9 credits

While a language is not a requirement, based upon student interest and intended vocation, study of certain languages – inclusive of, but not limited to Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese – is advised when possible.

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on an BIE topic chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required. The thesis should demonstrate knowledge of and engagement with relevant theories, methods, and sources in the interreligious engagement discipline, and should develop a compelling and focused argument.

Church History/Historical Studies

This concentration is aimed at students who intend to deepen their knowledge of and reflection upon historical processes that have shaped Christian churches. Many students consider doctoral study in history in a context of seminary theological education, religious studies, or religious history as practiced in history departments. Students have the opportunity to acquire skills in the evaluation of primary sources, use languages where appropriate to chosen areas or periods of interest, and compare and contrast analytical arguments and theories as applied to historical questions.

Concentrators work in two areas: (1) a major area of nine credits in courses approved by the advisor and (2) a minor area of six credits approved by the advisor, chosen from the following historical periods: a) Ancient, b) Reformation and Early Modern, and c) Modern Christianity and other historical studies.

Course Requirements

- Core requirements of CH 107, CH 108, CH 109 plus an additional advanced course
- Advanced CH courses in the combined historical periods as described above – minimum 9 credits
- Concentrators with a major area of the Ancient period usually take a biblical exegesis course – minimum 3 credits
- Concentrators with a major area of the Reformation and Early Modern, or Modern Christianity and other historical studies, are expected to take a relevant course outside the field – minimum 3 credits

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on a topic related to the historical study of Christianity chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required. The thesis should demonstrate an effective grasp and deployment of primary sources drawn from records of the period, movement, or historical process being studied. If essential for the objective of the thesis, students should demonstrate use of relevant languages and/or modern scholarship in languages other than English. The thesis is graded on the extent to which a compelling and focused argument is developed that discuss primary sources, integrates language knowledge as appropriate, and engages with relevant secondary literature.

Interreligious Engagement

This concentration is intended for students planning to pursue advanced studies, teach, or work in applied contexts that require competency in interreligious engagement. Students in this concentration cultivate:

- (1) competence in fostering meaningful and ethical interactions amidst religious diversity
- (2) understanding of and competence in the theories and methods of interreligious engagement
- (3) substantial knowledge of and familiarity with at least two religious traditions

Course Requirements

- IE 102-*Religions in the City: Introduction to Interreligious Engagement* as a core requirement
- IE course(s) in theories and methods – minimum 3 credits
- Tradition-specific course(s) other than in Christianity (e.g. IE/STX 242-*The Qur'an: Engaging a Sacred Text*, IE 240-*Socially Engaged Buddhism*) – minimum 3 credits
- IE course(s) in comparison (e.g. IE/RE 344-*Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations*, IE/TS 326-*Comparative Feminist Theology: Islam and Christianity*, IE/TS 313-*Hindu-Christian Dialogue*) – minimum 3 credits
- Courses in religious traditions other than one's own – minimum 6 credits
- RE 319-*Teaching Theology and Religion* recommended for students who anticipate teaching

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on an interreligious engagement topic chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required.

The thesis should demonstrate knowledge of and engagement with relevant theories, methods, and sources in the interreligious engagement discipline, and should develop a compelling and focused argument.

Islam and Interreligious Engagement

This concentration is intended for students planning to pursue advanced studies, teach, or work in professional contexts that require competency in this area. Students in this concentration cultivate:

1. robust and nuanced understanding of the foundational sources, disciplines, practices, diversity, and contextual realities of Islamic traditions and Muslim practice
2. the ability to critically engage Islamic traditions and Muslim practice in relation to social disparities based on gender, race, class, sexuality, and other marginalizing forces
3. substantial knowledge of and familiarity with at least one other religious tradition
4. understanding of and competence in the theories and methods of interreligious engagement

Course Requirements

- STX 242-*The Qur'an: Engaging a Sacred Text* or another Islam-focused STX course as a core requirement
- IE 102-*Religions in the City: Introduction to Interreligious Engagement* strongly recommended as a core requirement
- SE 217-*Islamic Ethics* or TS 230-*Islamic Religious Thought* as an additional core requirement
- An Islamic history course as an additional core requirement
- Advanced Islam-focused courses – minimum 9 credits
- Advanced IE course(s) in theories and methods and/or comparison – minimum 6 credits

While a **language** is not a requirement, based upon student interest and intended vocation, study of certain languages – inclusive of, but not limited to, Arabic – is strongly advised. Arabic may be offered through Hunter College and other summer programs.

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on an IIE topic chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required. The thesis should demonstrate knowledge of and engagement with relevant theories, methods, and sources in the interreligious engagement discipline, and should develop a compelling and focused argument.

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 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 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. Students become familiar with foundational models for both theory and practice.

Examples of contexts in which this concentration could be deployed include, but are not limited to: 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.

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

Course Requirements

- PS 110-*Pastoral Listening Practicum* as a core requirement
- PS 101-*Introduction to Pastoral and Spiritual Care* as a core requirement (strongly recommended in the first year) especially for students focusing on pastoral practice, and as a prerequisite for many concentration electives
- One basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) to understand theory and pastoral theology from within a supervised practice experience
- Additional advanced Psychology and Religion courses
- PS 415-*Readings in Psychoanalysis: From Object Relations to Relationality* is strongly recommended in the second- or third-year especially for students focusing on psychological theory

Some Practical Theology (PT) and Supplemental Co-Curricular (SU) courses with substantial related content may count towards this concentration. Consult the faculty advisor or academic office for review/approval.

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on a psychology and religion topic chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required. The thesis should display 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. An argument should be made for a thoughtful integration and critical correlation of both the above in relation to the student's concentration.

Religion and Society

This concentration is intended for students interested in the intersectionality of religion and society. The role of religion in relation to structures of oppression and struggles of liberation constitutes the main focus of our work in this concentration. The impact of religion in personal, socio-political, spiritual, and ecological dimensions of those structures and struggles is 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, is 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 are a focus of this concentration. Students 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 are uniquely positioned to make use of an abundance of available resources.

Undergraduate coursework in sociology, religious studies and/or professional experience in church/religious work is desirable but not required.

Course Requirements

- RS 262-*Methods in the Study of Urban Life and Religion*
- RS 325-*Liberation Theologies and Pentecostalism*
- RS 335-*African Religions in the Americas*
- Additional advanced Religion and Society courses – minimum 6 credits

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on a topic relevant to the intersectionality of religion and society (e.g. poverty, gentrification, race/racism, gender, church growth, marginalized religions and immigration) chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required. The thesis assists students to make use of sociological theories of religion acquired in their coursework 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.

Social Ethics

This concentration equips students to identify multiple sources, methods, and norms for social ethics. Some Theological Studies (TS, formerly ST) courses with substantial ethics content may count towards a Social Ethics (SE, formerly CE) concentration. Consult the faculty advisor or academic office for review/approval.

Course Requirements

- A foundational Social Ethics course (e.g. SE 208-*Moral Traditions and Social Ethics*, SE 322-*Social Ethics in the Making*)
- Advanced Social Ethics courses – minimum 6 credits
- Additional advanced courses as approved by the faculty advisor – minimum 6 credits

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on a social ethics topic chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required. The thesis is graded on the extent to which a compelling and focused argument is developed, integrates language appropriately, and demonstrates knowledge or and engagement with relevant secondary literature.

Theological Studies

This concentration is intended for students planning to pursue advanced studies, teach, or work in applied contexts enriched by critical reflection in theological studies.

Course Requirements

- TS 103-*Critical Perspectives in Modern Theology* and TS 104-*Introduction to Systematic Theology* as core requirements
- Advanced course in either Philosophy of Religion (PR) or Social Ethics (SE) – minimum 3 credits
- Advanced course in comparative theology, Islamic theology, or theology outside the Christian tradition – minimum 3 credits

- Advanced Theological Studies (TS) courses, one recommended on a major theologian or theological loci – minimum 6 credits

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on a theological studies topic chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required. The thesis is graded on the extent to which a compelling and focused argument is developed, integrates language appropriately, and demonstrates knowledge or and engagement with relevant secondary literature.

Theology and the Arts

This concentration is intended for students to relate the fields of theology, ritual theory, and performance and art. Students are expected to have prior knowledge of the arts, and be proficient in some art form (music, visual art, dance, etc.) before beginning the program.

Course Requirements

- CW 280-*Colloquium in Theology and the Arts*
- Advanced courses in worship and the arts – minimum 6 credits
- Advanced courses in ritual performance and criticism – minimum 6 credits
- Additional courses as approved by the faculty advisor

Thesis Requirement

A thesis on a topic related to theology and the arts chosen in consultation with an advisor in the field is required. The thesis is graded on the extent to which a compelling and focused argument is developed, integrates language appropriately, and demonstrates knowledge or and engagement with relevant secondary literature.

Interdisciplinary

The concentration allows students to focus their 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 topics include, but are not limited to the following: black theology; feminist and womanist theology; ecological ethics; religion, society and the law; the Bible and social justice; LGBTQIA; etc. The topic or combination of subdisciplines should be developed in consultation with the faculty advisor and Assistant Dean for Academic Administration. Students declaring interdisciplinary this must write a rationale and upload it to their ePortfolio including a description of the concentration, how it relates to their academic and vocational goals, and a list of courses/subject areas relevant to the concentration.

Course Requirements

- Advanced courses in an agreed-upon topic area or combination of field subdisciplines

Thesis Requirement

A thesis engaging interdisciplinary study is evaluated based on 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 of the work. Interdisciplinary concentrators should deploy in their research, writing, and chosen professional or advanced academic contexts the basic content, perspectives, and analytical tools of their topic.

Master of Arts (MA) Degree Planner

<p>BIBLE 7-8 credits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> BX 101 – 4 credits <input type="checkbox"/> _____ upper-level BX/OT/NT – 3 credits</p> <p>Bible Concentrators also take:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> OT 101 – 4 credits <input type="checkbox"/> NT 101 – 4 credits</p>	<p>CHURCH HISTORY/HISTORICAL STUDIES 5.6 credits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CH 101 – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> _____ additional CH – 2 or 3 credits</p> <p>History Concentrators instead of CH 101 must take:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CH 107 – 2 credits <input type="checkbox"/> CH 108 – 2 credits <input type="checkbox"/> CH 109 – 2 credits</p>
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<p>THEOLOGY AND ETHICS 6 credits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> TS 101 OR TS 103 OR TS 104 – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> _____ upper-level PR/SE/TS – 3 credits</p>	<p>INTERRELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT 3 credits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IE _____ 3 credits</p>
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<p>MODERN LANGUAGE & PRACTICAL THEOLOGY 0.3 credits recommended</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____ upper-level CA/CW/PS/PT/RE/RS – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> modern language exam</p>	<p>THESIS 6 credits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> UT 150 and UT 151 and UT 420 (04) <i>(recommended option)</i> – 6 credits OR <input type="checkbox"/> UT 420 (06)</p>
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<p>CONCENTRATION 15 credits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>Psychology & Religion concentrators must also take CPE</p>	<p>ELECTIVES 9+ credits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>
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CREDITS COMPLETED			
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Fall:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	Summer/Fall:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
January/Spring:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	January/Spring:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
TOTAL: _____			= 51+

Master of Arts (MA) Degree Planner

Buddhism and Interreligious Engagement

BIBLE/SACRED TEXTS <i>7 credits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> BX 101 – 4 credits <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhism-focused STX _____ (e.g. STX 210, STX 342) – 3 credits 	CHURCH HISTORY/HISTORICAL STUDIES <i>6 credits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> CH 101 – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist history _____ (e.g. IE 212, IE 229) – 3 credits <i>(selected with advisor)</i>
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THEOLOGY AND ETHICS <i>6 credits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> TS 101 or TS 103 or TS 104 – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> IE 234 – 3 credits <i>should be taken as early as possible</i> 	INTERRELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT <i>3 credits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> IE _____ <i>(IE 102 recommended)</i>
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CONCENTRATION <i>15 credits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> IE 221 – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> IE 231* – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> IE 240 – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> IE 241* – 3 credits <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <p>*recommended</p>	THESIS <i>6 credits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> UT 150 and UT 151 and UT 420 (04) <i>(recommended option)</i> 6 credits OR <input type="checkbox"/> UT 420 (06) – 6 credits
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ELECTIVES <i>8+ credits</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____

CREDITS COMPLETED			
YEAR ONE		YEAR TWO	
Fall:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	Summer/Fall:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
January/Spring:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	January/Spring:	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
TOTAL: _____ = 51+			

Master of Arts (MA) Degree Planner

Islam and Interreligious Engagement

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TOTAL: _____	= 51+														

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR ePORTFOLIO

Every Union student has an ePortfolio created by the Academic Office. The ePortfolio lives in the student's Google Drive associated with the utsnyc.edu email address (not the Drive connected to a 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.

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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.