Religious Studies Honors
Requirements & Application

Application Deadline for Fall semesters- August 1. For Spring semesters- January 1
It is strongly recommended for students to submit applications well before this date to the
Academic Advisor Michelle D. Escalante email: mdescalante@austin.utexas.edu

Religious Studies Honors provides the opportunity for students to conduct in-depth research in
a particular topic to enhance their educational goals. The thesis should grow from the
student’s personal and academic interests and will be developed under the supervision of a
faculty advisor with expertise in the student’s area of interest. The Honors Thesis sequence
involves **two courses: R S 679HA and R S 679HB**, taken consecutively. The majority of the
student’s research is completed during the R S 679HA portion of the sequence, at the end of
which the faculty advisor will assign a grade. The second half, R S 679HB, will be spent writing
the thesis, generally 50-60 pages (plus bibliography).

The successful completion of an Honors Thesis depends upon a good working relationship
between the student and the faculty advisor. The student is expected to take initiative in
communicating with their faculty advisor and scheduling meetings throughout the year. The
student and their faculty advisor should select the Second Reader as early as possible, and
no later than the 12th class day of the semester the student is enrolled in R S 679HB. Qualities of
a Second Reader: a Second Reader will assess the thesis with the following criteria in mind:
*Quality of argument, breadth of research in primary and secondary sources, quality of writing
and organization, and conformity with current rules of proper academic conduct.* A
completed and bound copy of the approved thesis must be submitted to the department by
the [last class day](#) of the semester in which the thesis is written.

Although the faculty advisor will provide the main source of guidance on the project,
information regarding procedures for the honors thesis is available in the R S Thesis Manual.

**Admission Requirements**

- upper-division standing
- UT GPA of at least 3.0
- Religious Studies GPA of at least 3.5
- Strong research and writing skills. Completion of 1-2 writing flag courses with a grade of B+ or
higher preferred

**Special Circumstances**

- A Religious Studies thesis will satisfy the Plan II thesis requirement. Plan II/R S majors pursuing this
option will receive Special Honors in Religious Studies (instead of Plan II)
- It is possible to register for 679HA in the spring semester and 679HB in the fall
Requirements for Graduating with Honors

• R S 679HA with a grade of at least “B.” R S 679HB with a grade of “A”
• Maintain a UT GPA of at least 3.0 and a Religious Studies GPA of at least 3.5

Honors Requirements

• 33 hours of Religious Studies coursework
• Religious Studies 679HA, 679HB: Honors Tutorial Course (two semesters)
• Honors Thesis

Suggested Timeline

R S 679HA

• 12th Class Day: Submit research prospectus and draft of the project bibliography to Faculty Advisor
• Mid-semester Deadline: Complete initial research/reading phase. Meet with Faculty Advisor to discuss progress
• Last Class Day: Submit a detailed outline and a draft of the introduction or prospectus to the Faculty Advisor

R S 679HB

• 12th Class Day: Complete draft of first chapter. Select Second Reader and inform Honors Advisor
• Mid-Semester Deadline Day: Submit completed first draft of thesis to the Faculty Advisor for comments. Faculty Advisor will return draft with comments within two weeks
• 12th Week of Classes: Submit a final draft to both readers. This will allow two weeks for final corrections, revisions, binding, and collecting signatures on final copy
• Last Class Day: Submit bound, signed copy of thesis OR PDF of thesis to the Religious Studies Academic Advisor

Items to submit

In consultation with the Faculty Advisor, the student should develop a rough schedule with deadlines for the following materials. Use the Suggested Timeline above as a guide. Students are not expected to submit everything on this list.

• Project Outline
• Annotated Bibliography
• Prospectus
• Literature Review
• Rough Draft
• Final Copy to Faculty Advisor
• Bound, signed copy OR emailed PDF to the Academic Advisor
To the Faculty Advisor

NOTE ON GRADING: While it is common practice at the University for Faculty Advisors to submit a grade of incomplete for the first semester and wait until final production of the thesis in the spring to assign grades for both semesters, the Religious Studies department encourages faculty to give students a letter grade at the end of the semester when completing 679HA. It may be necessary in this case for students to have completed a substantial piece of writing—such as a prospectus, draft of an introduction, or detailed outline—in order to receive a grade. This is suggested practice in order to help students stay focused and on track during the semester they are completing 679HA. However, decisions regarding grading are left entirely to the discretion of the Faculty Advisor.

Religious Studies Honors Application

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<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
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<td>Primary Major &amp; Minor:</td>
<td>Cumulative UT GPA:</td>
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<td>Additional Major(s):</td>
<td>UT Religious Studies Hours completed:</td>
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<td>Expected graduation date (semester &amp; year):</td>
<td>UT Religious Studies GPA:</td>
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In a separate document, submit a personal statement (1-2 pages) discussing your academic background and interests, as well as the following:

- Project title
- Abstract: no more than one paragraph
- Method of evaluation: In conjunction with your Faculty Advisor, determine how your work will be assessed and graded.

Name of Supervising Faculty:
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<th>Signature of Supervising Faculty:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Signature of R S Honors Advisor:</td>
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<td>Signature of Student:</td>
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