Religious Studies Honors
Requirements & Application

Application Deadlines: Fall- August 1; Spring- January 1; Summer June 1
It is strongly recommended for students to submit applications well before this date to the Academic Advisor, Michelle D. Escalante email: m escalante@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 their thesis advisor. The student is expected to take initiative in communicating with their thesis advisor and scheduling meetings throughout the year. The student and their thesis 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.

Although the thesis advisor will provide the main source of guidance on the project, information regarding procedures for the honors thesis is available in the Religious Studies 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

Items to submit
In consultation with the Thesis Advisor, the student should develop a rough schedule/timeline with deadlines for the following materials. Students are not expected to submit everything on this list.
• Project Outline
• Annotated Bibliography
• Abstract
• Literature Review
• Rough Draft
• Final Copy to Thesis Advisor
• Bound, signed copy OR emailed PDF to the Academic Advisor

To the Thesis Advisor
NOTE ON GRADING: While it is common practice at the University for Thesis 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 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 Thesis Advisor.
Religious Studies Honors Program Application

Name: ____________________________       EID: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________       Total hours completed at UT: _________

R S hours completed: _________       R S GPA: _________       UT GPA: _________

Expected Graduation Semester & Year: ____________________________

Thesis Advisor’s name: ____________________________

To be completed by student and instructor (be specific with all requested information).
Please provide separate page(s) if more space is needed.

Thesis topic and description: ____________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Readings: ____________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Performance Expectations: ____________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Meeting times: ____________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature       Date

____________________________________________________________________________

Thesis Advisor Signature       Date
To be completed by department:

Approve application: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Undergraduate Faculty Advisor Date

add date: ________________ contacted on: ________________

notes: