TO BE ADOPTED:

The Riverside Division of the Academic Senate approves the proposal for M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Religious Studies as described in the attached documents received in the Graduate Division in August 2003 (revised January 2004).

JUSTIFICATION (adapted from program proposal)

The graduate program in Religious Studies will be administered by faculty from the department of Religious Studies within the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. The program will be designed around a particular matrix of theoretical, methodological, and conceptual concerns shared among the Department faculty. In brief, UCR’s graduate program in Religious Studies will critically appraise the force of religions in contemporary global cultures, contacts and conflicts. Recent geopolitical events have demonstrated that religion remains not only extremely powerful in human affairs, but promises to become an increasingly influential and volatile force in contemporary society. More than ever, religion needs to be taken seriously within the academy. UCR can not only respond to this urgent intellectual and social exigency, it can lead the way, creating the first twenty-first century religious studies graduate program: a program prepared to help students and citizens understand these contrapuntal times of globalization and religious resurgence.

UCR’s program will balance and integrate the humanistic approach to religion with those of the social sciences and the arts. Accordingly, the program will focus on the contemporary scene, but understands that there is a deep historical perspective and will also make use of contemporary theory to reinterpret the origins and spreads of classic religious traditions. This will significantly change the way in which the program will interpret “globalization”, providing much needed time depth and comparative perspective while articulating the ways in which processes of religious colonization and contestation underway today are like and like those of antique worlds.

The proposal has been examined and approved by the following committees of the Academic Senate: Graduate Council, Planning and Budget, Educational Policy, and Library. The proposal has the approval of the Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Pierre Keller, Chair
Graduate Council

Enclosures: Program Proposal (including memos of support)
Memos from the above mentioned Academic Senate committees
A proposal for a program of graduate studies in

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees

University of California, Riverside

August 2003
(revised: January 2004)

Submitted by the Faculty of the Department of Religious Studies:

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and Objectives of the Program

The Department of Religious Studies proposes to launch a graduate program (offering both master’s and doctoral degrees), that will channel the wide-ranging expertise of its faculty to craft a program of study that engages religion as a political and social dynamic on the contemporary international stage. This program will be designed around a particular matrix of theoretical, methodological, and conceptual concerns shared among the Department faculty. In brief, UCR’s graduate program in religious studies will critically appraise the force of religions in contemporary global cultures, contacts, and conflicts.

Recent geopolitical events have demonstrated that religion remains not only extremely powerful in human affairs, but promises to become an increasingly influential and volatile force in contemporary society. Even religion’s modern critics have reappraised their classic positions and come to acknowledge religion’s crucial social function in and beyond modernity. More than ever, religion needs to be taken seriously within the academy. UCR can not only respond to this urgent intellectual and social exigency, it can lead the way, creating the first twenty-first century religious studies graduate program: a program prepared to help students and citizens understand these contrapuntal times of globalization and religious resurgence.

UCR’s program will balance and integrate the humanistic approach to religion with those of the social sciences and the arts. Even though most of the current UCR faculty have been rigorously trained in exotic ancient and classical languages such Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Arabic, classical Chinese, Pali, and Sanskrit—and are grounded correspondingly in the study of one or more historical cultures from the Hellenistic world to Southeast Asia—all have developed appropriate expertises in the study of religion in contemporary life. While they will also continue to teach and publish about that remote world of the ancients, their “faces are turned forward” toward our own time. For example, Smith’s writing about capital punishment is rooted in his early publications on human sacrifice; O’Connor’s interests in human rights, war and peace call forth an historical grounding in the work of ancient and medieval theologians like Augustine and Aquinas; and Jacobs creatively spans the centuries in his new course on the ways an ancient scriptures of the West become modern “biblical fictions.”

The culture of contemporary life—especially its public face—attracts and challenges the faculty in the Department of Religious Studies at UCR: Nyitray’s new course on cinema and the sacred, her field work on contemporary cults in Taiwan, Smith’s writing and teaching on religious violence and new religious movements, O’Connor’s efforts regarding liberation theology in Latin America and the questions of death and dying, or human rights, Martin’s fieldwork and publications on modern cinema and the sacred, his activity concerning Native American legal issues, Strenski’s entry into debates over Waco, public education and nationalism—all speak of a department united by common interests.

Accordingly, our program will focus on the contemporary scene, but we will understand this in a deep historical perspective; we will also make use of contemporary theory to reinterpret the origins and spread of classic religious traditions. This will significantly change the way we interpret “globalization,” providing much needed time depth and comparative perspective while

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1 See, for instance, the recent sentiments of Marxist literary critic Terry Eagleton (The Idea of Culture [Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2000], p. 68) and evolutionary scientist David Sloan Wilson (Darwin’s Cathedral: Religion and the Nature of Society [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002]).
articulating the ways in which processes of religious colonization and contestation underway today are like and unlike those of antique worlds.

1.2a **Historical Development of the Field**

The discipline of religious studies traces its roots back to the critical inquiries of classical (Greek and Roman) thinkers into the rational scheme of mythology, philosophy, and ritual, resulting in the potential for the analytical study of religion as a category of culture and society. Desiring to hearken back to these classical roots, the modern academic study of religion dates from about 150 years ago, to the foundation of professorial chairs in some of the leading universities of Western Europe. These professors were set apart from the (Christian) theological studies originally established to serve the confessional needs of various churches. This study of religion was to be a comparative and academic enterprise, devoted to understanding the diverse religions of the world and what they might teach us about the human enterprise.

In the United States, during past few decades, the field has grown enormously: departments or programs of religious studies exist at all major colleges and universities on the North American continent. In general, contemporary religious studies represents its founding legacy by insisting upon a critical, comparative, crosscultural, and interdisciplinary approach to the complex facts of human religious life, without deliberate prejudice to or preference for any religious tradition.

Religious studies, much like comparable academic fields in universities such as political science, women’s studies, or art history, is a multi-methodological effort of research distinguished by its specific object of study. Religious studies is not characterized by a particular methodology, as is the case in fields such as mathematics or statistics. Scholars of religious studies seek to account for and understand the religious domain of human life by a variety of methods, sometimes employed alone, at other times in interdisciplinary combinations with the methods of several disciplines.

We seek to uncover those religious aspects of human affairs that play their part, among other features of human life, in making the world what it is. That lesson needs to be especially taken to heart in today’s world of widespread religious strife. We risk ignoring the central role of religion in the lives of many of the world’s inhabitants when we flatten the intricacies of global conflict to economic or narrowly political motives. Christians, Muslims, Hindus (to take but a few obvious examples) are, of course, formed by the constraints of finance and government: they are, however, no less formed by their complex relations to their religious rituals, their sacred texts, and their spiritual leaders.

The legacies of the explicitly Western, normatively Christian mode of religious studies that obtained at the origins of the academic study of religion has, perhaps ironically, been productive in spurring enormous complexity, of both subject and method, within the field. As scholars of religion in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have come to terms with an academic genealogy of Orientalism and colonialism, voices that remain, at times, marginalized within the academy-at-large have been encouraged to take center stage in the field of religious studies which is, by definition, “multicultural” in the best sense of the word. Too rarely do entrenched academic disciplines acquire the capacity for generative and self-reflexive awareness of the bounds of their own production of knowledge. In the present state of affairs in the academic study of religions, such self-reflexivity has become a *sine qua non.*
The contemporary study of religion reaches out in many directions. Some scholars work comparatively across several religious traditions, focusing on common crosscultural themes such as myth, ritual, gift, scripture, mysticism, sacred, saints, and even the concept of “religion” itself. Others try to draw together the lessons one might learn about religion and, indeed, the world in general, by studying common crosscultural religious ethics, the relative place and attitudes towards gender, the “other,” or toward the construction of the individual. Religious Studies, among the humanistic disciplines, demonstrates notable synthesis of professional specialization and broad-ranging interest.

1.2b  Historical Development of Departmental Strength in the Field

The potential database of religious studies as a field of inquiry is constituted by all of the religions of the world; departments of religious studies are necessarily selective in range and reach, yet seek to demonstrate some breadth even as they seek, in both teaching and research, depth of understanding and analysis. Historically, departments of religious studies (or religion, or theology) in North America have followed narrow, westernizing models of the “study of religion,” implicitly or explicitly drawing on Christianity and (to a lesser extent) Judaism as the baseline models of religious traditions, and only fitfully supplementing these baselines with “the others traditions”: Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Shinto, Daoism, Native American traditions, and so forth. The result, in many North American institutions that offer full programs in religious studies, is a striking disparity. According to a recent (2000) survey conducted by the American Academy of Religion, with funding from the Lilly Foundation, fully 86% of public institutions offer courses in “Christian Traditions,” while fewer than 40% offer courses in “indigenous traditions” or Confucianism or Daoism. The very syntax of this survey bespeaks a critical lack in most religious studies education in this country: the study of non-western religions is seen as supplementary to the (Judeo-Christian or biblical) study of religion, a burden and expense to “add on” to their central, western curriculum. Additionally, the survey demonstrates many latent biases that inhere in religious studies curricula across North America, such as the preference for the study of doctrine and beliefs over rituals and practices and the reluctance to integrate critical discourses of race and gender into the broader study of religion.

From its inception in 1969, the Department of Religious Studies at UCR has resisted all of these counterproductive scholarly trends and established a program of undergraduate study based on a different kind of academic model, one particularly fitting for the scholarly climate of diversity and exploration at UCR. The undergraduate curriculum has been integrative and comparative in its approaches to the study of religion, engaging students and professors alike in the ongoing effort to conceive of religion in its entirety—as a system of ideas, practices, beliefs, attitudes—and in its particularities—as a disparate web of traditions, cultures, and modes of existence.

The first three faculty members of the Department brought expertise in religious traditions commonly described in shorthand fashion as “western” and “eastern” religions, striking a deliberate balance that sought to overwrite the domination of religious studies by Judeo-Christian ideas and assumptions. Jill Raitt (Ph.D., University of Chicago) was a specialist in the history of western religions, particularly Christianity; Frank Cook (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin) contributed a specialization in eastern religions, specifically Buddhism; Douglas Parrott (Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley) assured coverage of biblical and

2 The results of this survey were published in a special Fall 2001 supplement to Religious Studies News--AAR, and are available online at: http://www.aarweb.org/department/RSNAARCensus.pdf.
Gnostic materials of antiquity. When Jill Raitt left for Duke University in 1973, June O’Connor (Ph.D., Temple University) was selected in part because of her interests in comparative thought, expressed in a newly developing field known as comparative religious ethics. Cook, Parrott, and O’Connor sustained the program through the 1980s when two more positions were provided, both in eastern traditions: Brian Smith (Ph.D., University of Chicago) brought expertise in the religions of India, and Vivian-Lee Nyitray (Ph.D., Stanford University) in the religions of China. Cook retired in 1988, and Parrott in 1992. In 1992, the Department also increased its role in the university-wide curriculum by cross-listing one of the larger introductory undergraduate religious studies courses (RLST 12: Religious Myth and Ritual) with the Ethnic Studies Department, allowing this popular course to fulfill the University’s Ethnicity breadth requirement. This move brought the important study of religions more centrally into the curricular framework of UCR.

In 1995, Ivan Strenski (Ph.D., Birmingham University) joined the faculty as the first Holstein Family and Community Chair in Religious Studies, an endowed position made possible by the Robert and Loretta Holstein Family and Community friends. Strenski’s focus on theory and method in the modern study of religion, especially in France, together with his studies in Judaism, Christianity, and Buddhism further enriched the comparative framework and methodological sophistication of the department.

Joel Martin (Ph.D., Duke University) joined the faculty in 2000 as the Rupert Costo Chair in American Indian Affairs, with a joint appointment in Religious Studies and History. Andrew Jacobs (Ph.D., Duke University) came in 2001 with knowledge in ancient Judaism and Christianity and Michael Feener (Ph.D., Boston University) joined the faculty in 2002 with expertise in the study of Islam in diverse cultures. Through this continuing growth, the Department has built upon its original model of religious inquiry and framed itself as cross-cultural and comparative in range and reach while honoring the distinctive methodological approaches and academic interests of its faculty. These diverse approaches, methods, or modes of inquiry include historical, textual, and literary analysis, film studies, theological, philosophical, and ethical interrogation and interpretation. Through the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, this relatively small faculty continues to service a large cross-section of the UCR student population (roughly 2500 students per year), bringing to fruition this vision of religious traditions viewed through the lens of cross-cultural inquiry and critical analysis that refuses to privilege one mode of understanding yet honors the particularity of traditions and cultures. While the Department anticipates future growth in order to serve this growing undergraduate population, the faculty has also reached an appropriate critical mass to allow for graduate education, as well (see the chart outlining faculty size in Religious Studies departments below on p. 31). The Department feels it is now time to expand this vision from the important work of undergraduate education to the training of new scholars, and new visionaries of the academic study of religions.

1.3 Timetable for Development of the Program

The faculty of the Department of Religious Studies proposes to admit its first M.A. and Ph.D. students in Fall 2004. Enrollment will be limited at first, to 4-6 Ph.D. students and 8-10 M.A. students; these numbers should remain constant through the first five to seven years of the

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3 The ratio of student/faculty teaching responsibility is consistently one of the highest in the entire University (see the statistical analysis of the UCR Office of Academic Planning and Budget: http://ucrapb.ucr.edu/institutional_planning/StudFacRatios/FAC3-Year02.htm).
program (allowing time for projected faculty growth). These limits will allow the program to remain small and focused, while still providing a diverse cohort of incoming students to participate in seminars and create a collegial atmosphere among the graduate students. We will try to keep a ratio of fewer than one-third international students, although we will continue to encourage ongoing relations that exist between our Department and religious studies programs abroad. Smaller numbers will also help ensure that we admit the highest possible caliber of students. Subsequent possible expansion of the program will be judged according to applicant interest and the availability of resources.

1.4 Relation of the Proposed Program to Existing Programs and Campus

The positive relations of faculty in Religious Studies and other departments bode well for the success of this new graduate program. At UCR, faculty outside of the Department, including individual historians, dance professors, comparative literature and English professors, sociologists, anthropologists, and other scholars in the humanities and social sciences acknowledge the importance of religion. Desiring to converse with colleagues critically trained in the study of religion, they have eagerly forged links with faculty within the Department of Religious Studies. For their part, faculty in Religious Studies have responded in a congenial, interdisciplinary manner. Already, Religious Studies faculty serve on the doctoral committees of graduate students in Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, English, History, Comparative Literature, Dance. Already, Religious Studies faculty participate in collaborative research groups at the Center for Ideas and Society. Already, a wide array of other departments cross-list undergraduate Religious Studies courses, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Cross-Listed Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RLST 12: Religious Myths and Rituals</td>
<td>Ethnic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 24: Introduction to Native American Culture and Religion</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 44: Gods, Ghosts, and Grandparents</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 107: Taoist Traditions</td>
<td>Asian Studies/Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 117: Mythology</td>
<td>Classics/World Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 135: History of Christianity</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 137A-B: Religious Cultures in Early America/Modern America</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 142: Chuang-tzu</td>
<td>Asian Studies/Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 144: Buddhist Literature</td>
<td>Comparative Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 160: Women and Religion</td>
<td>Women’s Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 163: Women of Early Christianity</td>
<td>Women’s Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 173: Political Religions and Religious Politics</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLST 178: Religious Biography</td>
<td>World Literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of this evidences a widely shared hunger in other departments within the College for advanced religious studies scholarship and graduate instruction. These strong forms of collaboration verify that UCR can develop a graduate program that will be solidly based on and generative of original interdisciplinary approaches. By creating a graduate program in the Department of Religious Studies, UCR can help satiate this hunger from other departments, expand in a much needed way the graduate offerings in CHASS, and create a strong program of national distinction.

The UCR graduate program in Religious Studies will continue to draw on the resources of other departments, as we have done for many years in our undergraduate program. Students will have the valuable opportunity to supplements their critically focused coursework in the
Department with courses in related Departments and Programs (such as History, Comparative Literature, Asian Studies, Native American Studies, and the new program in Southeast Asian Studies) so that they may emerge as strong, well-informed scholars of their chosen fields.

Because of the already strong interdisciplinary connections established between Religious Studies and other departments, a graduate program in Religious Studies will act as a catalyst across the College. To wit, in terms of joint faculty appointment, Martin now devotes half of his appointment as Costo chair holder to History, while in past years, Nyitray was jointly appointed in Comparative Literatures and Languages and Smith in History. Since his arrival in fall 2002, Feener has already became an integral component in the planning and expansion of the newly forming program in Southeast Asian Studies, which may soon result in expanded opportunities for the Department and the College: already the Department is working closely with this program to develop a new line in Buddhist studies to be housed in the Department of Religious Studies beginning in Fall 2004.

We are open to sharing future appointments of this sort as well in order for the College to achieve the goals of furthering interdisciplinary collaboration. Joel Martin is currently serving on a search committee to fill a senior position in Native American Sovereignty, a position that may reside in any number of departments but will, regardless, certainly strengthen our own Department’s offerings in this field. In terms of scholarly cooperation between faculty and involving courses in other departments, we have already demonstrated our interest in doing so now and in the future. We point to our well-established relations with Anthropology (Kearney), Art History, with whom we have a joint major and resources in colleagues like Ostrow and Rudolf, the History department (Godbeer, Head, McGarry, Rochberg, Salzman, Stuckey, Wall), Philosophy (Fischer, Glidden, Wettstein), and to a lesser extent with English (EGGL 100E) and Sociology (SOC 158). Our close and ongoing relations with these faculty members with allow our students chance to supplement their in-Department coursework with significant and enriching study across the College.

A graduate program in Religious Studies will also remove one source of tension with other departments. To wit, instead of competing with other departments to hire qualified graduate students for teaching sections in its large introductory courses, the Department will be able employ its own graduate students. This will benefit the students by providing them with sections led by students trained in religious studies and it will also end the kind of competition for T.A.s that currently exists.

The benefit to other departments goes beyond this, however. In addition to sending our own graduate students into other Departments in order to deepen their knowledge of their chosen fields, graduate students from other departments will have access to our advanced courses. Faculty from other departments will be engaged with our faculty in collaborative research projects and they will be invited to sit on the doctoral committees of our graduate students. New partnerships and courses will no doubt result. This kind of interdisciplinary connectivity and programmatic collaboration concords perfectly with the trends at UCR and beyond.

We note in particular that the ACLS and SSRC have recently begun exploring ways to co-fund projects that unite the humanities and social sciences. Our program will embody precisely this kind of union, which goes beyond interdisciplinarity. Because of the expertise of our faculty on religion and film, our graduate program in religion will also integrate a focus on the arts. Moreover, we envisage our program creating powerful synergies with traditional disciplines in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, but also with the new emerging
interdisciplines or area studies at UCR, including Film and Visual Culture, Asian Pacific/Southeast Asian Studies, Women’s Studies, and American Indian Studies.

Building on the strengths of a distinguished department within a College marked by dynamic forms of interdisciplinary collaboration and rising interest in the study of religion and arriving in an international context where the continued power of religion is newly appreciated as well as feared, the UCR graduate program will be the first twenty-first century Religious Studies graduate program established not just in California, but in the world.

1.5 Interrelationship with other Institutions and Programs

While graduate study in religion has been a part of many of the elite universities of North America for more than a century, it has only been in the past several decades that such programs have been mounted in public universities. The growth of UCR in this first decade of the 21st century demonstrates the degree to which public institutions, such as UCR, as becoming increasingly vital partners in the production of knowledge and critical thinking in the national and global market of ideas (see Section 3: Projected Need, below). The student population of the University of California has grown from roughly 140,000 in 1991 to 173,000 in 2001, a growth of approximately 25%: as the university population grows, so does the need for expansion of resources, programs, and opportunities. With the approval of a new graduate program in Religious Studies, UCR will enter the relatively small ranks of the major public universities offering a competitive graduate level program in this field (e.g., Indiana University, University of Virginia, University of North Carolina). A well-conceived graduate program in Religious Studies at UCR will in and of itself be beneficial insofar as it would help make available top-notch, graduate-level education in this discipline to the many students in this country served by our finest public institutions.

One of the oldest and most highly regarded of such graduate programs housed in a public university is that of UC Santa Barbara, and at present it is the only other UC graduate program in Religious Studies, offering both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. With a core faculty of some fifteen faculty, with another twenty affiliated and six emeriti faculty, UCSB’s program in Religious Studies is one of the largest and best in the country.

One of the principal reasons for the excellence of UCSB’s graduate program is that it does not try to do everything. Major areas of study are limited to Philosophy of Religion, Sociology of Religion, Religion and Culture, Mediterranean and West Asian Religion, and South Asian Religions. UCSB’s program is especially known for its excellence in the study of American religion. There is arguably no finer place to study American religious pluralism, thanks to the permanent presence of several distinguished faculty members focused on the study of U.S. religions, and now through the visiting faculty position named in honor of the late Walter Capps. Their strong emphasis on comparative American religious cultures enables UCSB to attract the best Americanist graduate students and to place them well in Departments of Religious Studies. It was no surprise that the Fulbright Foundation in the summer of 2002 determined in the wake of 9/11 to bring scholars from around the world to Santa Barbara to learn about American religious diversity.

The proposed UCR graduate program is designed to complement and supplement rather than compete with UCSB’s. The distinctive emphases and strengths of UCR’s graduate program in Religious Studies will differentiate it from UCSB’s, through our central focus on religion as a political and social force, as ideology, or as power. By focusing on religion and public policy,
religion and contact and colonialism, and religion and the media, UCR’s graduate program will propose socially pertinent, internationally timely interdisciplinary teaching and research.

We will work proactively to support UCSB’s continued excellence so that our program’s emergence is viewed by all as a win-win situation. UCR faculty in Religious Studies enjoy very strong and positive relations with the Santa Barbara program (three of our faculty have in the past been invited to teach there) and hold it in high regard. Our distinctive emphases and faculty expertise and interests will only increase the options available to students coming to California to study religions.

1.6 Program Administration

The program will be administered by the full faculty of the Department of Religious Studies; an office of Graduate Advisor will be rotated among the individual members of the faculty (for a term of 3-5 years), whose duties will include bringing issues pertaining to the maintenance and administration of the graduate program to the attention of the Department Chair and will report to the full faculty at regular departmental meetings. A Graduate Committee of three to four faculty members will also be constituted on a rotating basis to deal with admissions, guidance, and student evaluation; this committee will be responsible for providing annual written feedback to graduate students detailing their progress in the program. Issues of curricular change and administration that affect the entire program will be decided by the faculty in consultation with the Graduate Advisor and the Department Chair. Addressing issues relating to an individual student’s programmatic concerns or difficulties will be the responsibility the Graduate Advisor before a student’s advancement to candidacy, and the responsibility of that student’s dissertation advisor after advancement to candidacy. Consultation with the full faculty will occur as appropriate.

1.7 Program Evaluation

The faculty of the Department of Religious Studies will diligently monitor the graduate program in its first years, adapting expectations and operations as necessary to facilitate the most successful functioning of the program. In the third year of the program, the faculty will actively cooperate with the internal review normally conducted by the Graduate Council for new graduate programs, and will respond appropriately to extramural evaluations routinely conducted by an outside team of experts every 6-7 years, as is the norm for UCR graduate programs.

SECTION 2: PROGRAM

2.1 Undergraduate Preparation for Admission

Undergraduates applying to pursue a master’s or a doctoral degree in the Department of Religious Studies will be expected to demonstrate academic excellence through their previous scholastic record. They must meet at least the minimum UCR graduate requirements for admission. Applicants will also be expected to have worked in an academically compatible undergraduate major (such as, of course, Religious Studies, but also major fields such as Asian Studies, Philosophy, History, or Literature).

Doctoral applicants, in addition, will be held to a high standard of undergraduate preparation for pursuit of their graduate work: both basic and advanced courses in religious studies (both methodological and tradition-oriented studies), beginning work in foreign
languages (particularly if this will be an integral component of their particular course of study), as well as demonstrable ability to work across methods, traditions, and disciplines. Their statements of interest in their graduate application should show the beginnings of a series of critical engagements with a particular aspect of religious studies (a tradition, or critical area of inquiry) that they hope to pursue at the doctoral level (for example: Hindu ritual, Islamic hagiography, or Durkheimian theories of religion).

Master’s candidates will also be expected to demonstrate scholarly acuity, as well as critical interest in the disciplinary questions of the study of religions; in addition, they should show some intensive engagement with particular aspects of religious studies (either methodological or tradition-oriented), but, given the broader scope of the master’s program, will not be expected to demonstrate the more intense engagement with a particular aspect of study that is desired in doctoral candidates. Doctoral candidates who seem as yet unfocused in their fields of study may be encouraged to apply at the master’s level.

2.2 Foreign Language

All students must meet foreign language requirements in order to receive their degrees. These foreign language requirements are of two types: languages of scholarship and languages of research. Both Master’s and Doctor’s students must show proficiency in languages of scholarship; only Doctor’s students must show proficiency in languages of research.

The languages of scholarship in the discipline of Religious Studies are French and German. Master’s students must show reading proficiency in at least one language of scholarship (French or German); doctoral students must show proficiency in both languages of scholarship (doctoral students may also petition to substitute another, more relevant language of scholarship, such as Dutch or Italian). Proficiency in languages of scholarship may be demonstrated in one of three ways:

- Placing higher than level “3” on a UCR Language Placement Exam (administered by the French and German departments before Fall Quarter);
- Completing a reading course in French or German with a grade of S or B or higher (note: these courses will not count towards the overall required units for Master’s students);
- Completing a translation assignment administered by the Graduate Committee.

In addition, doctoral students must demonstrate proficiency languages of research: any language(s) deemed critical for examination of the primary texts in their declared field of study (for example: Japanese, Sanskrit, Arabic, Greek, Takic). The requisite languages of research for a doctoral student’s program of study will be determined in consultation with the Graduate Advisor and Graduate Committee.

Students should have begun basic instruction in their research languages before entering into the doctoral program; only 12 units of instruction in these languages will be counted towards their coursework requirements. Adequate language training—often in several research languages—is becoming increasingly vital in the professionalization of religious studies scholars. Therefore, the faculty will work with all students to ensure that they acquire the necessary expertise in their field languages.

Students will be encouraged to conduct cooperative work with other departments at UCR, at other UC campuses (especially nearby UCLA), and with faculty at other institutions of higher education in California and abroad (for instance, through interinstitutional application for
summer FLAS [Foreign Languages and Area Studies] grants at UC Berkeley or UC Davis). Undergraduate majors have already taken Arabic in the summers at UCLA, and a letter from the Department of East Asian Languages is appended to this proposal (Appendix C) assuring UCR of future cooperation in language study. Proficiency in languages of research will be determined by the students’ primary instructors in their field.

Master’s students must demonstrate proficiency in languages of scholarship before taking their comprehensive exams; doctoral students must demonstrate proficiency in languages of scholarship and languages of research before sitting for their qualifying exams.

2.3 Program of Study: Overview

The graduate program in Religious Studies will offer two degrees: a general master’s degree (M.A. Plan II) and a more specialized doctoral degree. The specialized doctoral degree will prepare students to enter into academia as researchers and university instructors in their specific field of expertise. The terminal M.A. program will allow students to explore the academic study of religion more broadly, and is geared towards students who are not certain whether they would like to pursue a career in university academics, or who would like to broaden their study of religion in an academic environment. At present, there are few master’s programs for students in southern California apart from seminaries or expensive private institutions, while the demand for such programs continues to grow (see Section 3.1).

All students in the program will complete the same required core courses in their first year: these core courses, which will be taught in rotation by all members of the Department, will orient the students towards the particular areas of critical inquiry that provide methodological and theoretical coherence to the graduate program as a whole. As they complete these core courses, students will be expected to pursue a more specialized curriculum, designed in consultation with the Graduate Advisor, in the last year (Master’s) or two years (Doctors) of their course work. Doctoral candidates will be expected to declare a major traditional field on which they will be examined (see below, 2.5 Qualifying Examinations); master’s students will be granted more leeway in pursuing broader, crosstraditional interests in their studies. In addition, as part of their program of study, both master’s and doctoral students will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in languages of scholarship and research (see above, 2.2 Foreign Language). The capstone requirement for master’s students will be a set of comprehensive examinations; doctoral students will be expected to propose, write, and defend a written dissertation after passing their qualifying exams.

2.3a Specific Fields of Emphasis

While there is certainly a place for large, full service programs in religious studies in the academy, at which students may pursue every methodological and traditional aspect of the field, the program at UCR will strive to focus areas of critical research to be more in tune with the research interests of the program faculty, and the richness of resources at UCR and in southern California in general. This program will operate along two curricular axes:

First, Areas of Critical Inquiry. These three areas, embodied in the core courses required of all students, may be described as methods, approaches, theories, and critical concerns in the field of religious studies that have been considered central to the study of religion in the late twentieth, early twenty-first century, and are shared among the Department’s faculty. Students coming to work in our graduate program are therefore expressing an interest in delving
into these particular ways of viewing the academic study of religion: as political, cultural, ideological, and interpretative lenses through which people understand themselves and others. This view of religious discourse as transforming and transformative not only describes the academic approach of our faculty, but also provides critical interfaces with scholarly work conducted throughout UCR.

All students (master’s and doctoral) will be oriented into these areas through three core courses taken in their first year of coursework. (Students may petition to delay one or more of these core courses to their second year due to curricular conflicts; in addition, students may repeat one or more of these core courses, which will rotate among the faculty, for full course credit.) These core courses are:

- **200A. Religion, Politics, and Public Discourse**
- **200B. Representations, Interpretations, and Critical Histories**
- **200C. Religions in Contact**

Full descriptions are found below in Section 5: Courses. These focused areas in the core courses will allow students to appreciate the particular “take” on religious studies offered in this Department, while still conveying to them a more multifaceted sense of the intricacies of professional scholarship of religious studies than is normally afforded by the single “methods and theories” course requirement in standard graduate programs in religious studies.

Second, **Fields of Study**. Most students will also enter the program in order to pursue a particular field, which will determine the focus of their research and seminar work beyond the level of core curriculum. It is expected that students will begin taking preliminary and, if appropriate, advanced courses in their field upon their arrival. The fields are also tailored to the individual and collaborative expertise of the Department, as well as the resources available at UCR, at UC, and in the southern California area. These fields are:

- Native American Religions
- Religion in the West
- Asian Religions
- Method & Theory

These four categories are traditional fields of research and teaching in the academic study of religion; by providing this sort of focus for our students, we are ensuring that they will be suitably professionalized and able to participate in the ongoing discourse of religious studies scholarship outside of our Department. We have limited our fields to these four in order to maximize the resources available for student research, in the Department, the College, and the University as a whole. This limitation will ensure that sufficient course work is available for students to gain an appropriate grounding in their “major” field of study, and allow the faculty to devise regular offerings in their respective fields and thus avoid the confusion of ad hoc course preparation designed to meet the needs of overly scattered student interest.

These four specific fields also capitalize on the rich resources available for UCR students throughout the College: in the Asian Studies program, the Native American Studies program, Comparative Literatures (including German, French, and Japanese literatures and cultures), and the burgeoning new program in Southeast Asian Studies. This limit on the potential fields for study in the Department will serve to give our program a distinctive character; yet, the four fields
are still conceived broadly enough to allow students the freedom to choose their particular focused interest within these fields, such as Politics in Modern Indonesian Islam, or Representations of Indian Religion in Film.

Throughout both the master’s and the doctoral programs of study, the intersection of areas of critical inquiry and fields of study will give the program both coherence and flexibility, as students advance in their studies of specific fields and traditions, while learning to construct and convey their specialized knowledge in theoretical idioms of dialogue and exchange across the academy.

2.3b  Plans: Master’s II and Doctor’s

The graduate program in the Department of Religious studies will offer a master’s degree (Plan II) and a Doctor’s degree. (See Section 2.3 for an explanation of the terminal master’s degree.) Students applying to the program will specify which degree plan they wish to pursue. Exceptional master’s students may be advanced to Ph.D. status with the recommendation of the faculty and the Graduate Division, as per Graduate Division requirements. Doctoral students who wish to exit the program early, before the completion of their qualifying exams, may (with faculty and Graduate Division approval) opt to complete a set of master’s level comprehensive examinations and exit with an M.A. degree. Doctoral students approved for early exit with a master’s degree cannot hold a previous master’s degree in religious studies.

2.3c  Unit requirements

Master’s students will be required to complete a minimum of 36 units of graduate level work in Religious Studies in order to qualify for their degree. Of these units:

- 12 units (three courses) must comprise the three core courses covering our areas of critical inquiry (see 2.3a Special Fields of Emphasis and 2.3d Required and Recommended Courses)
- The remaining 24 units (six courses) should attempt to balance narrow interest in one field of study (see 2.3a Special Fields of Emphasis) with a broad attempt at comparative work in the study of religion
- 18 units must be made up of 200-level courses

Additional coursework in related areas (history, anthropology, philosophy, and so forth) are encouraged for master’s students, as time and workload permit.

In addition to fulfilling the master’s-level unit requirements, doctoral students will be required to complete additional courses in their specific fields of study. Of the total course requirements for doctoral students:

- 3 courses must comprise the three core courses covering our areas of critical inquiry (see 2.3a Special Fields of Emphasis and 2.3d Required and Recommended Courses)
- 6-7 courses must explore in greater depth the student’s declared field of study (see 2.3a Special Fields of Emphasis) and should, additionally, help the student narrow their studies to an appropriate object of research for a doctoral thesis
- At least 3 courses should be taken in a different field of study in order to broaden the student’s ability to approach religious studies from thematic and comparative perspectives
• The remaining courses may be in any area related to an individual student’s program, pending approval of the Graduate Advisor

Doctoral students are expected to pursue advanced work in the languages of research related to their declared field of study, preferably work they have begun before entering the program. Only three courses of language instruction in one of the doctoral student’s languages of research may be counted towards the total course requirements for completion of degree.

Students who have completed graduate level work at another institution (but not completed an entire graduate program) may petition the Department and the Graduate Division to transfer some of those units according to the regulations of the Graduate Council. All students, regardless of coursework status upon entering the program, must complete the three core courses.

2.3d Required and Recommended Courses

All M.A. and Ph.D. students will be required to take the core courses in the areas of critical inquiry (see 2.3a Special Fields of Emphasis and Section 5: Courses).

Master’s students are expected in their coursework to develop sufficient familiarity with the major religious traditions and the prominent methods for examining them in the academic study of religion. Entering students with weaknesses in the basics of some religious traditions may be encouraged to take graduate-level survey courses in Asian or Western or Native American religious traditions (see Section 5: Courses). The curriculum for master’s students will be somewhat flexible, allowing them to pursue specific traditions and themes of interest to them, while achieving a balance of general formation in the study of religion.

Doctoral students are expected to develop a more precise field of study in their coursework, as well as developing a secondary field of study that will allow them to explore the methodologies involved in comparative religious studies work. Doctoral coursework should be viewed as a period of specialization and professionalization, during which students hone their scholarly abilities. It will be expected and encouraged that doctoral students especially take closely related courses in outside Departments (such as History, Anthropology, Comparative Literature, or Philosophy) in order to provide the necessary background and specialization in their chosen field of study.

2.4 Comprehensive Examinations

Master’s students will be required to complete a series of comprehensive written examinations in the final quarter of their program. These examinations, designed by the department and administered by a master’s examination committee, will test the student’s knowledge of both the specific field (or fields) on which they have chosen to focus, as well as the areas of critical inquiry that are the methodological and theoretical focus of this program. The content of the comprehensive exams will be based on each individual student’s coursework in years one and two of his/her master’s program, and will be evaluated by appropriate members of the Department faculty. No more than two attempts at passing these examinations will be allowed.

2.5 Qualifying Examinations: Written and Oral

Doctoral students will be required to complete a round of qualifying written examinations, followed by an oral defense of those examinations, in the quarter following their
completion of coursework. (Students may petition to defer their examinations for one quarter; such deferments must be evaluated by the graduate advisor in consultation with the faculty.) Each student will complete three written examinations over a two-three week period:

- Major field studies
- Comparative studies
- Critical studies

The exams will be written and administered by a committee (of at least four persons) comprising members of the Department faculty. These four faculty members will be those instructors with whom the doctoral student worked most closely during coursework; the Graduate Advisor will assist the doctoral student in putting this committee together. One of the faculty members will act as the chair of the committee. The chair of the committee should ideally be that faculty member with whom the doctoral student hopes to work upon advancement to candidacy, and this chair will take responsibility for coordinating the other members of the committee and the writing and administration of the written portion of the qualifying exams. In the period before the administration of these examinations, in consultation with the chair of the examining committee, each student will devise a comprehensive reading list of relevant materials on which s/he can expect to be examined.

The major field studies exam should evaluate a student’s mastery of his/her chosen field of study (e.g., Asian Religions) with particular attention to those subdivisions of this field of study the student has focused on in his/her studies (e.g., Hinduism). The comparative studies exam should draw on a secondary religious field of study, and give the student the opportunity to demonstrate the scholarly and pedagogical ability to elucidate aspects of the academic study of religions through the juxtaposition of more than one tradition (e.g., Judaism and Islam). The critical studies exam will draw together the various methodologies and theoretical approaches of the program’s core areas of critical inquiry into a comprehensive demonstration of a student’s mastery of the methods, approaches, and theories operative in the professional field of religious studies.

While all three examinations should be framed in such a way as to allow students to demonstrate their overall mastery of subjects and approaches, they should also be focused enough to prepare students for the more narrow, rigorous research work they will pursue once they have advanced to candidacy and begun work on their dissertations.

After the committee has had the opportunity to review the written examinations (usually not more than two-three weeks), students will present themselves for an oral examination by a five-person committee nominated by the Graduate Advisor and officially appointed by the Graduate Dean. The majority of this committee must comprise members of the faculty of the Department (under normal circumstances, the four faculty members who have taken responsibility to compose the written examinations). At least one member of this committee must be a UCR faculty member not affiliated with the Department, as stipulated in the regulations of the Graduate Division. This outside faculty member is present primarily to ensure the fairness of the oral examination process, but may also participate more actively if his/her field of study is close to that of the student. The oral examination will be based on the student’s written examination answers. A student shall have failed his/her qualifying examinations if more than one member of the committee votes to fail. The committee may then determined whether or not the student should be allowed to retake his/her qualifying examinations, in whole or in part, and
a date no sooner than three months later shall be set for the second examinations. Students may
not take their qualifying examinations a third time.

2.6 Thesis and/or Dissertation

Doctoral candidates who have advanced to candidacy will research and write a
dissertation under the direction of a Dissertation Committee comprising not fewer than three
faculty, the majority of whom should be faculty from within the Department. The Committee
will be nominated by the Graduate Advisor and appointed by the Graduate Dean. Normally, one
member of the Committee will act as Chair, assuming primary responsibility for supervising and
mentoring the candidate in his/her research and writing.

Following the completion of the qualifying examinations and advancement to candidacy, the
Ph.D. candidate shall, within a reasonable amount of time (normally no more than three
months) prepare and present to his/her committee a dissertation prospectus outlining the topic,
thesis, methods, and resources for the completion of the written dissertation. This prospectus
must be circulated and approved of by all of the candidate’s Dissertation Committee members
before the student may begin working on the dissertation itself.

The dissertation should conform to the format prescribed by the Graduate Council. The
dissertation should treat a specific aspect of the candidate’s field of study, with the rigor and
precision required of a professional scholarly work.

2.7 Final Examination

When the Chair has determined that the completed dissertation is adequate, s/he will
convene the Dissertation Committee for a final oral examination of the doctoral candidate. This
examination shall deal primarily with the quality of the research and writing of the dissertation,
and its relation to the broader field of study in which the student has worked, and its relation to
the field of religious studies in general. According to Graduate Division regulations, this final
oral examination shall be open to the academic community and the general public, following the
format of a formal colloquium.

2.8 Special Additional Requirements

No special additional requirements.

2.9 Relationship of Master’s and Doctor’s Programs

Students applying to the graduate program in the Department of Religious Studies at
UCR must specify whether they wish to pursue a master’s or a doctor’s degree plan; their
applications will be evaluated on the basis of their qualifications for the proposed degree plan,
and they will be accepted for either the master’s or doctor’s program. Some applicants may be
encouraged at the time of application to apply to the master’s rather than the doctoral program.

Although the basic curriculum for master’s and doctoral students is similar, comprising a
set of directed core classes required of all graduate students and more advanced seminars in
specific traditions, the expectations for the two programs will remain distinct. Master’s students
will be expected to achieve proficiency in the general fields of religious studies, and basic
mastery of one or two traditions, demonstrated by the completion of comprehensive
examinations. Doctoral students will be expected to progress beyond proficiency and basic
mastery, into much more specialized work within one field of study. Doctoral dissertations
should be specialized studies of professional quality, demonstrating the candidate’s readiness to enter the field as a colleague.

Master’s students will not normally advance to doctoral status, but their degrees will be terminal (on the justification for this terminal degree, see Section 2.3). Master’s students wishing to remain at UCR to pursue a doctoral degree in religious studies must receive the strong support of the Graduate Advisor, the initial approval of the graduate faculty, and the approval of the Graduate Division in order to advance to Ph.D. studies: such requests will be made to the Graduate Division only rarely, and only when a student’s potential is deemed to be extraordinary. Master’s students who have been advanced to doctoral status will not have to repeat the core curriculum, and their completed courses will be evaluated to determine which requirements for doctoral coursework may be waived.

2.10 Special Preparation for Careers in Teaching

Although no formal classes will be offered in pedagogy, most master’s and doctoral students will have the opportunity to serve as Teaching Assistants in the many lecture courses offered by the Department. Doctoral students nearing the completion of the degree will also have the opportunity to apply for teaching positions within the department. If chosen from among a pool of lecturer applicants, these advanced students may be hired to serve as Associates-In, giving them the opportunity to devise their own syllabus and teaching materials with the guidance and advice of the faculty of the Department.

In addition, the Department will institute a regular workshop series that will meet several times a year. Under the guidance of members of the faculty, graduate students in these workshops will have the opportunity to learn how to present research in professional settings, enter into the job market, prepare a syllabus, and other skills directly related to the professionalization of teacher/scholars.
## 2.11 Sample Programs

### Sample M.A. (II) Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>WINTER</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>200C. Religions in Contact</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Discourse*</td>
<td>Interpretations, and Critical Histories*</td>
<td>(RLST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202/203/204. Graduate Survey of</td>
<td>200-level seminar (RLST)</td>
<td>200-level seminar (RLST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Tradition (RLST)</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>200 - level seminar (RLST)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-level seminar (RLST)</td>
<td>100-level seminar (CPLT)</td>
<td><strong>300B. Religions in Contact</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Year 2**                        |                                              | **Comprehensive Examinations**                |
| 200-level seminar (RLST)          | 290. Directed studies (RLST)                | **297. Directed research (RLST)**            |
| 200-level seminar (HIST)          | 297. Directed research (RLST)               | 302. Teaching Practicum (RLST)               |
| 301. Directed Studies in the      | 302. Teaching Practicum (RLST)              | **Completion of comprehensive examinations**  |
| Teaching of Religious Studies      | **Begin studying for comprehensive          | **Comprehensive Examinations**                |
| (RLST)                            | examinations**                              | **Completion of comprehensive examinations**  |

* Required core courses (see 2.3a Special Fields of Emphasis)

Notes: An M.A. student would be expected to devise a curriculum, in consultation with the Graduate Advisor, that strives for balance between a narrow focus on a specific field of study and a broader range of comparative courses, through both in-Department and extra-Departmental coursework. The program outlined above demonstrates a "minimum" amount of coursework: students may decide to take one or more courses in the final quarters of their program.

### Units towards the M.A. Degree

- **Core courses:** 12 units
- **RLST survey course (MA level):** 4 units
- **RLST seminars:** 12 units
- **RLST directed studies:** 4 units
- **Related seminars outside of RLST:** 4 units

**TOTAL M.A. UNITS:** 36 units
## Sample Ph.D. Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>WINTER</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>200A. Religion, Politics, and Public Discourse*</td>
<td>200B. Representations, Interpretations, and Critical Histories*</td>
<td>200C. Religions in Contact*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced language course (in research language[s]) related to FOS†</td>
<td>200-level seminar (CPLT) in FOS‡</td>
<td>200-level seminar (CPLT) related to FOS‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>200-level seminar (RLST) in FOS‡</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>200-level seminar (RLST) in secondary FOS‡</td>
<td>292. Concurrent Studies in Religious Studies (RLST) related to secondary FOS‡</td>
<td>200-level seminar (RLST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>300-level seminar (RLST) in FOS‡</td>
<td>300-level seminar (HIST) in FOS‡</td>
<td>200-level seminar (HIST) related to FOS‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>301. Directed Studies in the Teaching of Religious Studies (RLST)</td>
<td></td>
<td>302. Teaching Practicum (RLST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>300-level seminar (RLST) in FOS‡</td>
<td>300-level seminar (RLST) in FOS‡</td>
<td>291. Individual Study in Coordinated Areas (RLST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>200- or 300-level seminar (HIST)</td>
<td>291. Individual Study in Coordinated Areas (RLST)</td>
<td>Advanced language course (in research language[s]) related to FOS‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>302. Teaching Practicum (RLST)</td>
<td>Preparation for qualifying examinations</td>
<td>302. Teaching Practicum (RLST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation for qualifying examinations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking qualifying examinations (written and oral)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Core courses (see 2.3a Special Fields of Emphasis)
† FOS = Field of Study (see 2.3a Special Fields of Emphasis)

Notes: Year 3-Year 4 may be distributed so that exams are taken earlier (Winter Year 3) or later (Fall Year 4), depending on the schedule of the doctoral student, his/her Committee, and other scheduling concerns particular to the student. This curriculum represents a typical division between in-Department and extra-departmental coursework. Summers between coursework may be spent in study of languages of research and scholarship; in addition, students will be guided in seeking funding for appropriate and enriching summer programs locally and abroad. This particular sample program also attempts to convey a typical funding scenario for a doctoral student: local fellowship funding (college or university) in year 1; teaching assistantship in years 2-4; and outside funding (dissertation fellowships, teaching, and so forth: see Section 7: Graduate Student Support) in years 5-6.

**Program course requirements**
Core courses: 3 courses
Primary field of study (FOS): 12 courses (6 in RLST, 3 in research language, 3 in a related program)
Secondary field of study (FOS): 3 courses (2 in RLST, 1 in a related program)
2.12 Normative Time from Matriculation to Degree

Normative time from matriculation to degree for an M.A. student should be two years (six quarters), including the successful completion of comprehensive M.A. examinations. Normative time from matriculation to degree for Ph.D. student will be six years (eighteen quarters).

SECTION 3: PROJECTED NEED

3.1 Student Demand for the Program

The academic study of religion has always been an integral part of the North American academy. Presently, free-standing departments or interdisciplinary programs in religious studies exist at almost every major university and four-year college in North America. When the American Academy of Religion conducted a survey of religious studies programs in North America in 2001, they identified close to 2000 programs that met their survey criteria at public and private (sectarian and nonsectarian) universities and colleges. With the growing awareness of the significance of religious institutions and ideologies in the public square in recent years, the importance of the work done in these academic settings should not be undervalued.

Despite this richness of undergraduate offerings throughout the academy, the opportunity to pursue the academic study of religion beyond the undergraduate level remains much more circumscribed. Students seeking post-secondary education in the academic study of religion often find their choices limited to private universities or sectarian institutions (seminaries and divinity schools). In the greater Los Angeles area, for instance, the only post-baccalaureate degree program at a public university is the newly established master’s program at California State University-Long Beach. California students who wish to pursue their study of religion have traditionally left the area (which is not always practical, feasible, or desirable for the student) or attended private universities (such as Loyola Marymount Universities) or seminaries (such as the Claremont School of Theology or Fuller Seminary). As is demonstrated in geographic areas around North America, public universities have a vital role to play in the ongoing professional training of scholars of religion, and the University of California should take a lead in that process.

At present only one other division of the University of California offers a graduate program in religious studies: UCSB, which operates a large and diverse graduate program. According to their departmental information, they receive “between 110-140 applications” per year, of whom approximately 35-40 are offered admission, and of whom approximately 15-20 matriculate. These numbers suggest a broad, competitive, and discriminating student population seeking higher education in religious studies. Given the prominence of our own faculty in the discipline of religious studies, we would expect to achieve similar applicant numbers as our program grows. Our own undergraduate majors often express interest in pursuing their studies of religions at the graduate level (recent students have entered into religious studies degree programs at UCSB, Claremont Graduate University, and Indiana University). In 1982, in

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response to student interest, the Department initiated a cooperative program with the School of Religion at Claremont Graduate University that would permit UCR Religious Studies majors to be jointly registered at UCR and CGU for their senior year, constructing a program that allowed them to complete their undergraduate major and get a head start on a master’s degree. Logistical complications arose between the two institutions that made the workability of this program difficult; student interest in pursuing a graduate program in religious studies that is both affordable and challenging has not appreciably waned among our students.

Already, at the undergraduate level, UCR’s Department of Religious Studies attracts returning or “mature” students with significant work experience in fields as diverse as education, health care, retail business, and astrophysics—all of whom wish to acquire or strengthen their understanding of religion as it factors into their lives and professions. We would expect that at least some of our potential M.A. and Ph.D. population would include individuals like these, as well as people in pastoral or religiously-affiliated careers who want to enhance their academic understanding of religion but who do not wish to pursue a theological degree.

The particular perspectives that the Department offers in the study of religion, building on our faculty’s scholarly interest and inscribed into a well-defined graduate curriculum, will draw on a demonstrable student interest in religious studies across the academy, and provide a valuable site for public university study currently undermet in our geographic area. Located in one of the fastest-growing and most diverse regions in the country, the proposed graduate program will attract potential students from this burgeoning population. Beyond local communities, however, the reputation of the faculty, both departmental and campuswide, will surely attract a national and international pool of students to Riverside.

3.2 Opportunities for Placement of Graduates

The field of religious studies is growing on an international scale. In Europe, as nations implement the provisions of the Bologna Agreement and move toward BA-MA structures and English-language graduate instruction, important new programs in Religious Studies are in development across the continent: a significant new program has been launched at the University of Leiden, and other major institutions will soon follow suit. Nationally, new graduate programs in Religious Studies (or closely related programs, e.g., Religions of Asia within Asian Studies) have been launched or expanded significantly in the past three years at public institutions such as the University of Arizona, the University of Colorado, and the University of Florida. At present, only one University campus, Santa Barbara, offers graduate training in Religious Studies; its applicant pool far outstrips its ability to enroll. Given the international drive to understand religion as a major sociocultural as well as historical force, the demand for serious graduate training in this discipline is not likely to diminish in the coming years. The time is ripe for the University of California to expand its public leadership role in the training of religious studies professionals.

Employment statistics from the last three years demonstrate that, while the market for tenure-track employment in religious studies remains highly competitive, the number of permanent positions available in institutions of higher learning is fairly stable. The following numbers refer only to positions advertised at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion.6

6 Statistics available from the American Academy of Religion; obviously, this chart does not take into account searches conducted without use of the Employment Information Services provided at the AAR annual meeting, but is nonetheless representative of the religious studies job market as a whole.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positions</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of Positions to Candidates</td>
<td>1:4.1</td>
<td>1:3.86</td>
<td>1:3.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a job market of such consistent stability, well-trained doctoral students emerging from strong programs will continue to be marketable and competitive.

The question arises, however, of what exactly students would be trained for. According to the 32,000 graduate students who participated in the National Doctoral Program survey, conducted in 2001 by the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students and financed by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, most entering graduate students want an academic job and think they will be able to secure one, despite the realities of the job market. The greatest failure of graduate departments, according to the survey results, is that graduate faculty neither understand the practical realities of the market nor adequately prepare students for nonacademic careers.7

Members of the Department of Religious Studies at UC Riverside understand that not everyone who earns a doctorate will emulate the career of his or her mentor. Although the number of academic positions in Religious Studies has increased over the past several years, many of these are for lecturers, part-time, or temporary positions. The academy has traditionally been extremely myopic in its view of part-time or adjunct positions, conveying the message that only those who fail to qualify for “real,” i.e., tenure-track positions should look to such types of employment—and then, only for the briefest period possible. Similar attitudes perdure toward community college teaching positions or for employment with for-profit providers of educational services. Never the best of attitudes, such views are increasingly less useful and less reflective of the realities of the market and, in some cases, of the desires of graduates, for whom location, flexibility, and other factors may be valued over the hardships posed by the search for a tenure-track position. Thus, rather than respond to demand as measured by the number of tenure-track positions at Ph.D.-granting institutions, the Department of Religious Studies at UCR expects to train colleagues in the broadest of senses: we envision producing M.A.s and Ph.D.s who will be prepared to meet the evolving needs of our society, in which the importance of understanding religious phenomena has recently assumed great significance and urgency.

In considering how to make doctoral work in the humanities relevant, the Woodrow Wilson Foundation’s Responsive Ph.D. Program identifies four areas of concern, all of which are envisioned at the core of the graduate program in Religious Studies at UCR:8

- **New paradigms** of innovative, responsive scholarship
- **New practices** of pedagogical as well as scholarly training, including training in understanding the application of knowledge beyond the academy
- Attraction, training, and retention of new people—women and students of color in “real numbers”—in response to the observation that the Ph.D. may appear too exclusive, abstract, or socially irrelevant

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7 The results of this survey are discussed in Kimberly Suedkamp Wells and Adam Fagen., “A Little Advice from 32,000 Graduate Students,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 14, 2002).
• Building new partnerships to create powerful, permanent dialogue between the producers and consumers of Ph.D.s.

We believe that focusing on these areas is consonant with UCR’s campuswide mission of broad community educational outreach, and that such a focus will enable us to emphasize a concept of professional development in which a diverse community of M.A.s and Ph.D.s will be expected and enabled to have a tangible influence on the social reality of our time. Such a vision is also in keeping with new initiatives established by the professional association of religious studies in North America, the American Academy of Religion (AAR). Through the offices of its standing Committee on Religion and Public Understanding (which includes a UCR faculty member, Ivan Strenski), the AAR construes the educational mission of its members in broad terms. Examples would be the recent establishment of religionsource.com, an online resource for journalists that connects them with religious studies professionals; the AAR’s post-Waco hosting of law enforcement bodies at its conferences, arranging discussions and simulations that enable law enforcement officers to deal sensitively and knowledgeable with a multi-religious public; and its many recent partnerships with arts and entertainment professionals to showcase religious art forms and to better inform the public about world religious cultures.

In addition to the critical thinking and project management skills that any humanities Ph.D. garners in his or her training, religious studies training inherently encompasses broad knowledge about human history, culture, and society, and it typically entails the study of several languages. It is notable that in fields such as History and English, with relatively poor hiring prospects for traditional academic positions, the number of job advertisements for people in area studies and/or ethnic studies is rising.9 The Woodrow Wilson Foundation’s Humanities at Work project offers insight into available paths for Religious Studies M.A. and Ph.D. graduates, citing the need for corporations, non-profit organizations, schools, and government agencies to hire individuals who possess proven abilities beyond general communication and project management skills, viz., people who have some depth of understanding of the values that both bind and divide our society. Recent discussion in The Chronicle of Higher Education highlights another as-yet-unmet challenge: the training of academics who will put their skills to work on issues such as civil liberties, human rights, and public policy concerns. In this regard, Religious Studies M.A.s and Ph.D.s are uniquely able to discern and evaluate the direct impact of ideologies on people’s lives.10 For some graduates, a Religious Studies graduate degree will complement previous or additional professional training in education, journalism, public health, public policy, or other field; for others, the Religious Studies graduate degree itself will prove sufficient preparation for administrative or consulting careers.

Writing in The Chronicle of Higher Education, Clement Alexander Price noted, “The public arena holds vast scholarly and professional possibilities for those who resist academic pressures to insulate and isolate.” This endeavor cannot be one-sided, however, and even as we aim to encourage our M.A.s and Ph.D.s to put their skills to work outside academe, so too must we urge businesses, the non-profit sector, and government agencies to mine the rich lode of talent they offer. UCR’s signal strength derives from its conscious striving to maintain rigorous

academic standards while breaking the “ivory tower” mold, foregoing estrangement from community social and cultural organizations, and from K-12 education.

The research, teaching, and service records of UCR Religious Studies faculty—and in complementary departments—display a deep commitment to demonstrating the relevance of our academic interests to the needs of the community, the nation, and the world. The faculty of Religious Studies have long been involved in educational consulting at many levels, from working in the mid-1990s “4 Rs Project” of the San Bernardino County Board of Education, in which several faculty members worked with K-12 educators on developing appropriate means and modes for discussing religion in public school classrooms (the fourth R of “reading, ‘riting, ‘rithmetic, and...”), to conferring with a delegation from the Danish Ministry of Education as to how best to develop an ethics curriculum for gymnasium/high school students. The Department’s commitment to developing applied knowledge is also of long standing. The Department administers academic community internships for its undergraduates, and the extension of these into experiences appropriate for graduate students would be natural. One faculty member, Vivian-Lee Nyitray, has, for a number of years, offered graduate workshops on interviewing techniques and the job search through the AAR’s Employment Information Services. In mounting a new graduate program, and training new professional “experts” in the academic study of religion, the faculty of the Department plans to incorporate this experience in the broader range of social options for the religious studies expert, to open up a broader range of employment possibilities for M.A.s and Ph.D.s in religious studies.

3.3 Importance to the Discipline

Religious studies has done important work in expanding knowledge by developing innovative and non-ethnocentric ways of understanding different peoples and traditions. Although the discipline emerged from within the Euro-American paradigms of “western” canon and the production of “normative” knowledge in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, religious studies at times has also provided one of the few venues in the humanities for the sympathetic and critical engagement with non-western cultures and societies. In the twenty-first century, the academic study of religion remains poised to open up that parochial sense of western normativity, by expanding, interrogating, and, at times, even directly challenging notions of canonical knowledge and identity. The Department of Religious Studies at UCR has stood at the forefront of this critical role in the production of new knowledge, resisting overly westernizing models of religious studies, and combining theoretical attention to the human social category known as “religion” with specific and detailed attention to the ways in which religious traditions have functioned and continue to function in their native settings. By training researchers and teachers who likewise recognize the crucial role that the academic study of religion can play within the academy and within society-at-large, UCR’s Department of Religious Studies can contribute to the ongoing evolution of an academic discipline that can itself serve to transform the production of knowledge, and the production of new visions of human society.

3.4 Ways in which the Program Will Meet the Needs of Society

Recent global events have demonstrated that religion remains not only extremely powerful in human affairs, but promises to become an increasingly influential and volatile force in contemporary society. Scholars trained in religious studies have long argued this, but now policy makers and journalists are beginning to recognize its truth as well. Among other things, they are reappraising interpretative models that neglected the influence of religion or explained
In the face of overwhelming facts, “Kicking the Secularist Habit” has become mandatory and mainstream, to borrow the title of a recent *Atlantic Monthly* column by David Brooks, who is a contributing editor of Newsweek, a senior editor of the *Weekly Standard*, and a political analyst for *The NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer.

In his March 2003 column, Brooks proposes a “six-step program” to realign perception, research, and policy with religious realities. “It’s now clear,” he states, “that secularization theory is untrue.... The most successful social movement of our age is Pentecostalism.... It now embraces 400 million people...[and] could reach a billion or more by the half-century mark.... Now we are looking at fundamental clashes of belief and a truly scary situation—at least in the Southern Hemisphere—that brings to mind the Middle Ages, with weak governments, missionary armies, and rampant religious conflict.... Understanding this world means beating the secularist prejudices out of our minds every day.”

Brooks recognizes the failure of the domestic-policy analysis apparatus to grapple adequately with religion—“our foreign-policy elites are at least two decades behind.” Moreover, he affirms the need for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of religion. Unfortunately, because he is seemingly unaware of the existence of the academic discipline of religious studies, he assumes that such an approach does not yet exist. In sum, he correctly diagnoses the blindspot of the elite and the educated, but he does not realize that the academy has already generated the cure: an interdisciplinary, non-confessional, scholarly approach that takes religion seriously, studies it critically, and analyzes its influence in the contemporary globalized context.

Brooks’ disciplinary oversight reflects the need for a new and robust graduate program in religious studies. Although the discipline has been present in academia for close to two centuries now, only in its most recent incarnations—conjoined with the unfortunate geopolitics that have brought religion into such bright, sharp focus on the international stage—has the academic study of religions become poised to make a real difference on the stage of global affairs. Our new program, the first designed for the twenty-first century, will contribute to this new age of insight and inquiry that does not ignore the implications and consequences of religious discourses. It will train scholars to gauge the influence of religion in the contemporary world and it will empower policy makers to engage better the realities of world in which religions continue to exert extraordinary and dynamic influence, for good and for ill.

What Brooks observes at the foreign policy and global level pertains also to national and regional life. Reporters and writers need to know what questions to ask and where to go for information as they seek to make sense of those current affairs that are complicated by religious convictions and commitments. They also need to access the critical questions that enable media consumers to inquire, reflect, and critique the multiple ways through which religions function.

What can be said of reporters is true also of teachers at every level, of lawyers, judges, businessmen and -women, medical personnel, governmental representatives and others, all of whom work with people who come from or are drawn to diverse religious perspectives. In a word, scholars of religions are a vital need at the local, regional, national, and international levels of life where religions regularly motivate and contextualize the use and abuse--and/or non-use--of weapons technology, medical technology, and business dealings, together with the workings of political, economic, and legal systems. Multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious societies need informed and informative specialists in the study of religions so that personal conversations and public policies alike not be driven by ignorance about the religions operative in those very societies.
3.5 Relationship of the Program to Faculty Research and Interests

The graduate program in Religious Studies will draw on the academic expertise and interests of Department faculty to provide an innovative and intensive program of study. Building on the strengths of a distinguished department within a College marked by dynamic forms of interdisciplinary collaboration, this program will serve to use these resources in new ways. In particular this will be accomplished through this program’s unique structure, which is built around the intersections of selected areas of critical inquiry with work in specialized fields of study. As outlined above (see Section 2.3a), this program is oriented toward excellence in a relatively concentrated range of areas, rather than attempting comprehensive coverage in all fields in all ways. Given the relatively small size of the Department, such an approach seems the best way to ensure high levels of quality in both instruction and collaborative research. Students coming to work in our graduate program are therefore expressing an interest in delving into these particular ways of viewing the academic study of religion. At the same time, they will also be able to pursue specialized studies with experts in major fields, including Native American Religions, Religion in the West, Asian Religions, and Method & Theory. The intersection of these two axes, field specialization and critical inquiry, have fostered a departmental environment that promotes rigorous research standards yet also allows for productive conversation and collaboration. For instance, Professor Martin (an expert in Native American religions) and Professor Nyitray (an expert in Chinese religions) have both worked extensively on forms of cultural representation (film and biography); Professor Feener (an expert on Islam in Southeast Asia) and Professor Jacobs (an expert in ancient Christianity and Judaism) have both engaged their respective fields through the lenses of cultural studies of “contact” and colonialism. The critical dialogues that emerge from our common critical perspectives on the study of religion create an environment conducive to both detail work within our respective fields as well as more conceptual contemplation of the discipline of religious studies itself. By replicating this intersection of fields and critical discourses within the structure of our graduate program, our goal is to ensure that students and teachers will work together in an environment that is energized by close intellectual interactions between high-level teaching and the ongoing research interests of the faculty.

In addition, the structure of critical discourses and field specializations ties in with the planned programmatic growth of the Department in coming years. Over the course of the next three years we hope to initiate new faculty lines in areas such as Religions of Africa and the African Diaspora and Comparative Global Christianities, two areas of specialization that incorporate aspects of our faculty research fields (Religions of the West and Religions of Asia) while focusing them in critical arenas compatible with the faculty’s and graduate program’s critical interests (contacts, politics and representations). In future years we also plan to add positions in fields that likewise fill out our offerings from the perspective both of field specialization and areas of critical interest for both faculty and students.

3.6 Program Differentiation

At present, only one division of the University (UCSB) currently offers a graduate (M.A./Ph.D.) program in religious studies. As outlined above (see Section 1.5), the proposed program in religious studies at UCR is designed to be distinct from UCSB’s program both in its research focus and critical orientation. UCSB’s graduate program in religious studies is broad in both scope and method, giving students the opportunity to choose from among an array of fields and strategies for entering into the professional analysis of religious traditions. UCSB currently
offers students eight wide-ranging areas of study: Philosophy of Religion, Sociology of Religion, Religion and Culture, Mediterranean and West Asian Religions (including Hebrew/Jewish Studies, Hellenistic Religions/Early Christianity, and Islamic Studies), South Asian Religions (including Hindu, Sikh, South Asian Islamic, South Asian Buddhist, and Tibetan Buddhist traditions), East Asian Religions (including Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist, Shinto, and folk religious traditions in China and Japan), Religion in America, and Native American Religions. With 20 full-time faculty members and approximately 85 students, UCSB’s program in religious studies has for many years been a distinctive and important presence, both within the University and in the academy as a whole.

A small Graduate Program in the History of Religion exists in the Department of History at UCLA, directed by Professor Scott Bartchy. This program, a track with in the larger graduate program in history at UCLA, focuses uniquely on synchronic and diachronic studies within the history of Christianity from its origins through the ninth century. The coursework and dissertation requirements are geared to the training of professional academic historians who can go on to teach and conduct research within history departments. For example, students are expected to demonstrate facility and familiarity with all periods of history (which they might be expected to teach later in their careers), but have no requirements specific to the academic discipline of religious studies. The program at UCLA approaches a particular religious tradition from a different disciplinary perspective (that of the professional historian), and will no doubt act as a valuable resource for a graduate program at UCR, but not a competitive program.

The proposed graduate program in religious studies at UCR will, in contrast to the breadth of UCSB, focus on research areas that take advantage of the specific resources available at the University and capitalize upon the intersection of methodological and critical interests shared among our faculty. Far from being competitive with UCSB’s justly famous program, UCR’s program will rather be complementary, providing a distinctive curriculum and atmosphere for scholarly training and dialogue. Our faculty have been long been engaged with cooperative research and undergraduate teaching with our colleagues at UCSB; we look forward to the chance to expand and nourish this cooperative endeavor.

Outside of the University of California, graduate programs in religious studies offered in California institutions of higher learning likewise differ from the proposed UCR program, in terms of curriculum as well as institutional setting. California State University at Long Beach has recently begun offering a master’s degree in religious studies, but (as a member of the Cal State system) will not go on to offer a doctoral degree. Private universities, both nonsectarian and sectarian, offer master’s and doctoral degrees in religion, primarily Stanford University, the Graduate Theological Union (a consortium of theological schools and religious studies program in the Bay Area), and the School of Religion at Claremont Graduate University in eastern Los Angeles County. UCR’s program, through its uniquely crafted curriculum and sharply focused fields of study, will provide a distinctive voice alongside these prestigious programs. The diversity of religious studies scholarship in North American in the twenty-first century assures that additional opportunities for graduate study are not only possible, but indeed desirable within the University of California, as well as within the academy as a whole.

SECTION 4: FACULTY

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<tr>
<th>Name and Rank</th>
<th>Research Specialization</th>
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SECTION 5: COURSES

Since there are currently no graduate courses offered in the Department of Religious Studies, the faculty will be proposing an entire new slate of courses at the 200- and 300-levels (apart from RLST 302, which is currently open to teaching assistants hired by the Department). At present, the faculty have devised the following list of courses that might be offered: all of these courses draw the methodological and theoretical perspectives developed in the areas of critical inquiry introduced in the required core courses (see above, 2.3a Special Fields of
Emphasis), as well as providing adequate foundations for students pursuing specific fields of study (see above, 2.3a Special fields of emphasis).

Our current staffing should prove adequate for the first year or so of the graduate program (see the comparative chart of faculty size in religious studies departments below, on p. 31); as the faculty take on both required and elective graduate courses, the entire department will work hard to ensure that the undergraduate curriculum is adequately staffed. Recent hires in the department (three new positions since 2000) place our departmental strength at an optimal place to begin the early stages of graduate education; future hires (see below, Section 6.1) will be essential to manage both undergraduate and graduate growth, and to alleviate the Department’s historic (and necessary) reliance on part-time lecturers and adjunct instructors.

Listed below the proposed roster of courses are courses currently offered in related programs that might be considered for graduate credit in Religious Studies. Since the main fields of study are deliberately designed to encourage interdisciplinary and interdepartmental connections across the College (mirroring the work of the faculty members), students will be expected to make use of related course offerings in other departments in order to complement their coursework in the Department. The Graduate Advisor will work with students to make sure they exploit to the fullest the diversity of offerings across the College’s curriculum.

Numbers listed below are tentative, and grouped under identifying rubrics: core courses (see Section 2.3a); surveys open to masters students (see Section 2.3d); field-specific seminars; independent-study courses (we would expect few of these to be necessary until after year two); and professionalization courses. The sampling of seminars listed represent the range of potential offerings in the first two years of the program. Although actual offerings in these early years will of necessity depend on the fields of study of the graduate students, the present list represents courses that our faculty are ready to teach, and that combine the specific fields of study with the methodological emphases represented in the three required, core courses (200A-B-C).

Core Courses
200A. Religion, Politics, and Public Discourse
A critical examination of the intersections of religious identities and public politics. Specific topics of analysis will vary according to instructor, but might include: human rights, “church-state” debates, Islamism, civil religion, postcolonial religions. Core course required of all graduate students; repeatable under different instructors.

200B. Representations, Interpretations, and Critical Histories
A critical examination of how religious identity and religious studies have shaped, and been shaped by, modes of representation, interpretation, and historical awareness. Specific topics of analysis will vary according to instructor, but might include: religious biographies, art and architecture, religion and film, scriptural interpretation. Core course required of all graduate students; repeatable under different instructors.

200C. Religions in Contact
A critical examination of the ways in which religions confront each other, historically, politically, and metaphorically. Specific topics of analysis will vary according to instructor, but might include: syncretism, mission and colonization, religious wars, ecumenism, and “world religion” movements. Core course required of all graduate students; repeatable under different instructors.

Master’s Level Surveys
202. Graduate Survey of Asian Religions
Graduate level directed survey of major Asian religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto. Open only to M.A. students.

203. Graduate Survey of Western Religions
Graduate level directed survey of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Open only to M.A. students.

**204. Graduate Survey of Native American Religions**
Graduate level directed study of Native American religion in historical and contemporary situations. Open only to M.A. students.

**Field-Specific Seminars**

**210. Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion**
An examination of the impact upon Western self-consciousness of challenges to the historical, revealed, and unique status of biblical narrative and to the primacy of Christianity among the religions of the world. Responses by the classic thinkers of religious studies to the Wars of Religion, the discovery of the Americas, the plurality of the world’s cultures and religions, evolutionary theories, the discovery of the unconscious, and the behavioral and social sciences. Readings from Eliade, Frazer, Otto, the Deists, Hume, Max Müller, Durkheim, Freud, Weber, and Malinowski.

**222. Human Rights as Moral Discourse**
Inquiry into the moral dimensions of philosophical, religious, legal, and ethical traditions of “rights-talk.” Conceptual and historical inquiry will be supplemented by cross-cultural and case-study analysis from selected sites, such South Africa, Central America, China, and/or the United States.

**224. Comparative Religious Ethics**
Inquiry into a variety of debates: about ethics both religious and philosophical, theoretical and applied; ways in which comparative studies are conceptualized and practiced (R. Green, S. Twiss, B. Grell, D. Little, R. Hindery, and others). Attention will be given to specific ethical issues, to be determined by professor. Examples include social policy debates about abortion (W. LaFleur, D. Callahan, et al) or bioethics (J. Childress, Beauchamp, R. Green, others) and/or moral inquiries into virtue, such as courage (L. Yearley on Mencius and Aquinas, et al) or fundamental moral problems generated by suffering (E. Scarey, sources on suffering in Buddhism and Christianity).

**222. Biography and Theory in Religious Studies**
Studies of the relationship between the lives of selected theoretical thinkers in the study of religion and their conceptual and theoretical works. Special attention to Emile Durkheim, Mircea Eliade, Bronislaw Malinowski, Ninian Smart, and Max Weber. Readings from correspondence, autobiographies, biographies, diaries, novels, short stories, poetry of selected authors and put into relation to their academic publications.

**235. Christian Hagiography**
Study of the writing of Christian saints’ lives from a cultural perspective: What role did the holy man/woman (as social creature, and as textual “relic”) play in premodern Christianity, and how has that icon of sanctity been reformed, rejected, or renovated into modernity? What is the quality of holiness that inhered in particular individuals in the ancient Christian world, in the lives written about them, and in images and relics? Was this quality captured, subverted, tamed, or otherwise refracted between social reality and text?

**249. Public Religious Discourses in Modern Islam**
This course will examine both the content and dynamics of modern debates and discussions of religious and social issues in Muslim ‘public spheres.’ Entry into these complex spaces of contention will be made through a combination of primary source documents as well as secondary studies from the perspectives of various media studies, critical theory, anthropological, and religious studies approaches.

**251. India in the Western Imagination**
From the time of the Greeks to the present, India has functioned as an imaginative landscape upon which the West projects its dreams and nightmares. This course explores the sometimes contradictory myths and preconceptions of India as the cradle of spirituality; a land of miracles and monsters; the repository of fabulous riches but also of stunning poverty; the locale of backwardness and the teeming millions but also of secret wisdom and wonder-working gurus and sadhus. The readings and discussions will also focus on the methodological issues surrounding the study of “the other.”
252. Southeast Asian Islam
This course introduces students to a series of contextualized readings in translated primary source texts from Muslim Southeast Asia. Texts selected for the course will cover a wide range of genres from a number of languages spanning the fourteenth through the twenty-first centuries, approached from various historical, anthropological, literary, and other disciplinary perspectives designed to explore the richness of Islamicate textual heritages in the region and the ways in which its works might be brought into discussions of broader issues in the academic study of religion.

255. The Rise of Modern Hinduism
Hinduism has been radically altered and redefined in the past three centuries by the forces of colonialism and imperialism, militant and nonviolent resistance and nationalism, fundamentalism and religious pluralism, and by modernity in general. This course will survey recent developments in Hinduism in light of these forces in the attempt to gain a better understanding of the nature of contemporary Hinduism and of modern religion in general.

Individual and Independent Study
290. Directed studies
Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC); Master’s Program students may be graded on A-F basis. Course is repeatable.

291. Individual Study in Coordinated Areas. Variable hours. A program of study designed to advise and assist candidates who are preparing for qualifying examinations. Open only to doctoral students. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). May be repeated for credit.

292. Concurrent Studies in Religious Studies. Taken concurrently with 100-level courses in consolation with faculty instructor; grade based on completion of a graduate paper based on the topic of the 100-level course. May be repeated for credit.

297. Directed research
Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). Course is repeatable.

299. Research for Dissertation
Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). Course is repeatable.

Professionalization Courses
301. Directed Studies in the Teaching of Religious Studies
Program of orientation and instruction for Teaching Assistants in the discipline of religious studies; required of all new Teaching Assistants. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC).

302. Teaching Practicum
Required of all Teaching Assistants. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). May be repeated for credit.

Courses Currently Offered in Related Departments
Examples of courses our graduate students may pursue in other departments are listed below: these are courses that either broaden the areas of critical inquiry from different disciplinary perspectives, or that enrich a student’s background in a chosen field of study.

ANTH 218. Ancient Maya History and Religion.
CHN 108. Introduction to Classical Chinese Poetry.
ECON 272B. Political Economy: Efficiency, Justice, and Power.
ENGL 275. Seminar in Film and Visual Cultures.
SECTION 6: RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 FTE Faculty

The Department currently has 6.5 FTE, with one search for a junior position (in Southeast Asian Buddhism) currently underway. The long-term planning for growth in the Department has, for many years, centered on the expansion to 10 FTE (3-4 FTE over the next three to five years), filling in the curricular gaps that presently require us to draw on extensive use of part-time lecturers. Our current plan calls for expansion into the weaker areas of the undergraduate curriculum: positions in Comparative Global Christianities, American Religious Diversity, and Religions of the Spanish World. These FTE faculty will not only allow us to reduce our reliance on outside lecturers, but will also strengthen existing ties across the College (with Comparative Literature, History, and Ethnic Studies, for instance). These are the ties that make the prospects of a focused religious studies graduate curriculum so promising at UCR. The full expansion of the Department to 10 FTE strength will guarantee that our program will quickly become a valuable resource to our students (undergraduate and graduate) and to the College and University as a whole. Even at its present size, however, the Department stands in a comparable position to other graduate degree-conferring departments of Religious Studies, particularly in public and non-sectarian private universities, as the table below demonstrates.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Faculty Size of Graduate Degree-Conferring Departments of Religious Studies</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Public</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Full-time positions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenured positions</td>
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<td>Tenure track positions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term contract positions</td>
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<td>Terminal contract positions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint appointments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time positions</td>
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6.2 Library Acquisition

In terms of monetary support for the program, the Libraries currently spend about 2.5% of its annual monograph budget on materials in Religious Studies in recent years:

Monographic purchases:
- 562 titles, $20,970 (2001-2002, 2.5% of $847,714)
• 428 titles, $15,027 (2000-2001, 2.3% of $666,106)\(^\text{11}\)

This amount adequately supports undergraduate coursework in Religious Studies. However, when compared with the total number of publications in the field, the UCR Libraries would need to acquire additional materials to support academic program for the MA and the PhD degrees.

For example, according to our book vendor Yankee Book Peddlers, 2763 books were published on religious studies in North America in the fiscal year of 2001-2002, another 588 in the U.K. The total number of North American and U.K. publications on religious studies in this period is 3351 titles, of which UCR libraries only acquired 562 titles. If we assume that all the 562 titles are in English, that number only represents less than 17% of the total number of publishing output. This percentage is even smaller if we include materials published in other languages. Since the current spending only supports an undergraduate program in Religious Studies, more budgetary support is needed to launch a graduate program.

In the UC system, Santa Barbara is the only division campus with a Ph.D. program in Religious Studies. In the current fiscal year, the UCSB Libraries have a budget of $34,400 for Religious Studies materials just for firm orders. This does not count books from approval plans. For the fiscal year of 2001-2002, the UCR Libraries’ spending in the same category for firm orders is only $13,390. To follow their example, we would need to double our budget for Religious Studies materials if a graduate program is in place.

It is worth mentioning also that the current UCR budget covers only publications in English. If we include support for Religious Studies materials in Spanish, French, and German, we may need another $30,000 annually. Based on educated calculation, Latin American publications on the subject are projected to cost $10,000-15,000 each year; and French and German output in this area will cost about $10,000-$15,000 each.

Current spending vs. projection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2001-2 Monograph Purchases</th>
<th>Projected Monograph Spending (English)</th>
<th>Projected Monograph Spending (French, German, Spanish)</th>
<th>Projected Serial Subscriptions (Annual+10% inflation increase)</th>
<th>Projected E-Resources (Sub. to Philosopher’s Index, etc.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$20,970</td>
<td>$53,320</td>
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Additional funding projection total: $70,350

In order to develop and maintain a Religious Studies collection that can support programs with M.A. and Ph.D. degrees, not only do we need more funding, but we also need to develop other innovative ways of collection development, such as gift solicitation. Purchase of materials only represents a portion the library acquisition program. Every year, the Libraries receive many book donations from private parties and organizations. Many such donations include books on Religious Studies, and many times, the Library obtains valuable, out-of-print books from donations.

### 6.3 Computing Costs

If available resources in the College and University continue to grow apace with the growth of the campus, we do not anticipate additional computing costs for the graduate program.

\(^{11}\)Figures and projections compiled by the acquisitions department of Rivera Library, UCR.
We presently have computers and printers available to the undergraduate majors in our Department Library; in the first years of our program, we will make these resources available to graduate students, as well. As cost-effective resources become available, our goal will be to add them into the present student resources for the sole use of graduate students.

6.4 Equipment
No additional equipment will be necessary.

6.5 Space and Other Capital Facilities
At present the Department has sufficient space facilities to meet the needs of the small cohort of graduate students we expect to enroll in the first five years. Our Department Library, currently used primarily only by faculty and undergraduate majors, can serve as in the first years of the program a study and meeting area for graduate students. Our goal will be to acquire additional space solely for the use of the graduate students. Additionally, Ph.D. and master’s students serving as Teaching Assistants will have the use of an office while they are working for the Department. Our staff office space is currently large enough to house an additional staff member (Graduate Secretary: see Section 6.6 below).

As our faculty grow (see Section 6.1) the need for new office space will grow, as well. These future space requirements are, however, directly tied into the growth of the College and would not necessitate an exceptional allocation from the University. If the proposed CHASS building becomes fully funded, and the Department is relocated there as planned, we shall have adequate space to house a full staff, a full complement of graduate students, and a full complement of part-time instructors.

6.6 Staff
The implementation of a graduate program in the Department would necessitate the addition of one staff member, a Graduate Secretary. The Graduate Secretary will work with the MSO and Graduate Adviser as an interface between the administration, students, and faculty.

SECTION 7: GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT

The Department is committed to providing the maximum amount of support for graduate students, in order that they may accomplish their studies in a timely and effective manner. Our primary means of support for graduate students will be a combination of Fellowships from the College and TAships within the Department. In recent years, our Department has received sufficient funding to support a complement of at least 10 graduate students at full-time TA rates. Currently, the Department interviews and hires graduate students from other departments within the College; by reallocating these Teaching Assistantships to Ph.D. students and qualified master’s students, the Department can support a well-sized complement of graduate students.

We additionally expect our pool of Ph.D. applicants to be fully competitive for Dean’s Fellowships within the College, as well as external fellowships available to beginning graduate students in the humanities (the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in Humanistic Studies, the Jacob K. Javits Fellowship, the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship, the Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship for Minorities to name but a few). In addition, our faculty will incorporate graduate research assistants into future grant proposals. In the past, the faculty has been very successful in
acquiring outside grant money, and we expect to be able to use these resources in the future to provide additional support for our graduate students.\footnote{See the faculty \textit{curricula vitae} attached; some recent extramural grants include: Joel Martin, Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians ($100,000; 2002-2003); Vivian-Lee Nyitray, Blakemore Foundation ($10,000; 1997) and American Academy of Religion ($4000; 200); and Ivan Strenski, John Templeton Foundation ($10,000; 1997-1999).} Indeed, it is worth noting that graduate students in the Departments of History and Anthropology have already, in recent years, benefited from graduate research funds acquired by one member of our faculty (Joel Martin: $27,000 for Graduate Student Research in the past two years alone).

Doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy, and who have made significant progress in their dissertations, will also be eligible to apply to work as Associates-In to fill replacement and temporary positions within the Department (many of which are currently filled by advanced Ph.D. candidates in religious studies outside of the University; we expect our own students to be competitive with this applicant pool). Additionally, the Graduate Advisor and the faculty as a whole will also work with doctoral candidates to pursue external support from research and dissertation fellowships available to junior humanities and religious studies scholars (such as the Charlotte W. Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship), to ensure that every doctoral student can complete his or her program in a reasonable amount of time, with sufficient financial support.

\textbf{SECTION 8: CHANGES IN SENATE REGULATIONS}

No changes in Senate regulations will be required.
APPENDIX A: FACULTY CURRICULA VITAE
Attached are the most recent (July 2003) curricula vitae for the faculty of the Department of Religious Studies.
APPENDIX B: LETTERS OF EVALUATION FROM OUTSIDE INSTITUTIONS

The following letters of evaluation and support for the Graduate Program in Religious Studies at the University of California, Riverside, are attached (if starred [*] the letter has been solicited and will be forthcoming by Fall 2004):

Wade Clark Roof
Chair, Department of Religious Studies
University of California, Santa Barbara

Maria Heim
Graduate Advisor, Department of Religion
California State University, Long Beach

Karen Jo Torjesen
Dean, School of Religion
Claremont Graduate University

Wendy Doniger
Distinguish Professor, The Divinity School
University of Chicago

Frederick Denny
Chair, Department of Religious Studies
University of Colorado, Boulder
APPENDIX C: LETTER FROM LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS AT NEIGHBORING INSTITUTION