The Designated Emphasis in the Study of Religion

Administrative Home: The Graduate Group in the Study of Religion
Revision date(s): 3/4/2014
Graduate Council Approval: 6/16/2017

Article I. Objective

A. Specialization: The proposed Designated Emphasis in the Study of Religion would allow students to focus their studies on religion and society. Its thematic emphases and curricular structure would be closely aligned with those of the new Graduate Group in the Study of Religion at UC Davis. Much like the Graduate Group, a DE in the Study of Religion would help graduate students specialize in some aspect of the study of religion in a way not currently available through other existing Ph.D. programs. Some programs do offer training in religious traditions from specific disciplinary perspectives; these include history, English, Native American Studies, anthropology, and sociology. Unlike these programs, however, the DE in the Study of Religion provides graduate students with an interdisciplinary understanding of how religion in general has been conceptualized and studied historically and how these understandings continue to inform basic categories of thought, behavior and identity across the world and especially in the West. Rather than approaching religion as a fixed entity that informs change in other more dynamic fields (e.g. literature, culture, society, behavior), our DE would help students think about the study of religion as historically variable, contextualized, and itself constitutive of the subject of inquiry.

The focus of the DE is on an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Religion with a focus on how the category of religion has been conceptualized and theorized historically. The study of religion is of importance to doctoral candidates in the programs affiliated with the DE.

B. Affiliated Ph.D. Programs: Graduate Group Study of Religion, Anthropology, Comparative Literature, Cultural Studies, English, History, Music, Performance Studies, Philosophy, Sociology

C. Mission of the DE: The mission of the DE is to train students in the academic study of Religion particularly as it pertains to the ways in which religion as a category of analysis continues to influence basic categories of thoughts, behavior and identity across the world.

Article II. Membership

A. Criteria for Membership in the Graduate Program

1. Membership will include at least one faculty member from each of the affiliated programs/departments.

2. Appropriate academic and teaching title. Members must hold an appropriate academic title as (a) a member of the Academic Senate of the University of California (includes Professors, Lecturers with Security of Employment, Professors in Residence, Professors of Clinical "", Professors Emeritus/a, and Research Professors), (b) Adjunct Professor, (c) Lecturer (without Security of Employment) or (d) Lecturer Without Salary. Academic staff with primary appointments as Cooperative Extension Specialists or in the Professional Research series are not eligible.
to be members of graduate programs unless they also hold an appropriate instructional title (normally Lecturer Without Salary).

3. Active research appropriate to the discipline(s) encompassed by the program. Members may include individuals who are not members of the Academic Senate. A guiding principle in Council’s evaluation of membership is that membership rights are equivalent for all members regardless of Senate status. Council’s policy is not to approve bylaws that in effect create a two-tier membership by different categories of membership rights.

Membership is independent and separate from academic department appointments. Membership is based upon disciplinary expertise and active research, so members throughout campus are eligible for consideration to membership in the group.

4. Voting rights.
All members are eligible to vote on graduate program matters. See GC2011-04, Policy on Quorum, Voting Rights and Responsibility.

B. Application for membership.

1. How faculty may apply:
Faculty may self-nominate or be nominated by a member of the GGSR. In order to be considered, the faculty member must submit a CV and a cover letter indicating a willingness to offer courses for the DE, supervise dissertations, attend annual meetings, and, if asked, serve on the DEs Executive Committee. Final approval will rest with the Chair of the DE after consultation with the DE Executive Committee.

2. Anticipated contributions that graduate faculty members will perform as a member.
   a. Active role in the administration of the DE program by serving on DE administrative committees or as an administrative officer of the program.
   b. Providing graduate level instruction, as appropriate, in addition to research instruction.
   c. Service on dissertation/thesis and qualifying examination/master’s comprehensive examination committees.

C. Emeritus Status.
It will be assumed that all DE faculty members on becoming emeriti relinquish their membership to the DE. Membership may be continued upon receiving a written request that they wish to continue. It will be assumed that emeritus faculty participating in the DE will continue to maintain an active research programs. They are afforded the following rights: they may attend and participate in program activities (including meetings and administrative committees), may teach graduate courses, and may serve on student committees.

Emeritus faculty who are continuing members of the DE are afforded the right to vote on policy and bylaw issues related to the program.

D. Review of Membership
The Executive Committee will review the DE membership every three years to assess contributions made in terms of
   a. teaching graduate level courses,
   b. supervising doctoral students and
   c. participation in the administration of the DE.

E. Membership Appeal Process
Faculty denied membership or renewal may appeal to the Executive Committee of the DE by submitting a written request to the DE Chair. The Chair will call a vote of the Executive Committee within a month. Voting may be either by email or by mail. “Applicants denied membership or renewal of membership may make a final appeal to the Dean of Graduate Studies.”

Article III. Administration
The administration of the program and its activities will be vested in the DE Chair and an Executive Committee.

Article IV. Graduate Program Chair
A. Chair appointment process

Designated Emphasis Chair:
The Chair will be appointed in accordance with the Academic Personnel Manual policy UCD-245.B and the policies and procedures of the Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies.

The DE Executive Committee will solicit names of nominees for the DE Chair from the faculty and graduate students of the group. Those nominated will then be contacted regarding their willingness to serve. The names of the nominees who have indicated a willingness to serve will then be submitted to the Group’s faculty and graduate students for comments. All comments will remain confidential. In the first year of the DE, the GGSR Executive Committee will solicit the nominees for DE Chair.

The DE Executive Committee will forward at least one name to the Dean of Graduate Studies along with all comments received on the nominees. All comments solicited from faculty and students of the group will be treated as confidential information by the Group’s Nominating Committee and by the Office of Graduate Studies.

If the Group puts forward more than one nominee, it may express a preference for one and, if it does, should indicate the basis for determining that preference. The nominee(s) may be interviewed by the Dean of Graduate Studies (or delegate) and will then forward his/her recommendation to the Chancellor for appointment. The normal term of the Chair’s appointment is three years.

B. Duties of the Chair
The Chair:
   a) provides overall academic leadership for the program;
   b) develops and implements policies for the program;
   c) represents the interests of the program to the campus and University administrators;
   d) calls and presides at meetings of the Executive/Program Committee;
   e) calls and presides at meetings of the program;
   f) is responsible for coordinating all administrative matters with the Office of Graduate Studies;
   g) manages the budgets of the program;
   h) submits course change or approval forms;
   i) is responsible for the accuracy of all publications related to the program including web pages and catalog copy; and
   j) nominates graduate advisers for appointment.

Article V. Committees

Executive Committee
The Executive Committee shall consist of four faculty members and a graduate student representative. The committee will be constituted as follows: the chair of the DE, who serves as chair of the committee, the Chair of the GGSR, two elected from the membership, and one student. To ensure broad participation, the Executive Committee shall have members from at least three different departments. All members have voting rights, including the student representative, unless the student does not participate in the discussion due to the nature of the item (see below). The faculty members of the Executive Committee shall be elected for a three-year term, which is renewable two times. Depending on the need for new members, up to two new members can be elected each year.

Election of faculty members of the Executive Committee: nomination shall be made either by e-mail or from the floor at the annual Spring Quarter meeting of the program. Elections shall be conducted by mail or electronic-mail ballot within two weeks of the annual Spring Quarter meeting. At election, each member of the program shall vote for not more than the number of positions to be filled on a ballot provided, without weighing of choice. Those receiving the most votes will be declared elected. Ties will be resolved by lot. Election results shall be communicated to the members of the program promptly. Elected members shall assume their duties on July 1.

The principal duties of the Executive Committee shall be to determine and implement policy for the good of the program, and to represent the interests of the program generally to various universities and other agencies.

The Chair of the Executive Committee may rule that an item of business is inappropriate for discussion in the presence of the student representative. That item of business will then be discussed in the absence of the student member of the Committee. More generally, the chair of any committee with a student member must excuse the student representatives from meetings during discussion about personnel actions or disciplinary issues relating to faculty, during rankings of existing students for funding, and for disciplinary issues related to students.

The Executive Committee shall meet at least annually. Additional meetings and executive sessions may be held as deemed necessary, or upon petition by five members of the program. The Executive Committee shall fill interim vacancies for the remainder of the current year. As this is a small program, the Executive Committee shall fulfill the duties of the Membership Committee and will review membership every three years.

**Article VI. Student Representatives**
One graduate student will serve on the Executive Committee in order. The student will be elected by graduate students participating in the DE in Religion. Each elected student will serve for a period one year, with the possibility of renewal for a second term. The Chair of any committee with student members must excuse the student representatives from meetings during discussion about other students, personnel actions or disciplinary issues relating to faculty, during rankings of existing students for funding, and for disciplinary issues related to students.

**Article VII. Graduate Advisers**
The Chair of the DE will serve as the Graduate Adviser with signature authority. The principal duties of the Graduate Adviser are: advising with regard to student progress in the DE and advising with regard to DE membership on dissertation committees.

**Article VIII. Meetings**
A. The DE Program will hold at least one meeting, normally in the Fall quarter, called by the DE Chair to discuss issues pertaining to membership review, membership admission, elections to committees, and to discuss any other matters pertinent to the administration of the DE.
B. All DE faculty members will be notified by email announcement from the DE Chair at least one week in advance of the meeting.

C. Upon a written petition from three or more members, the DE Chair may call a meeting to discuss pertinent and pressing issues.

D. Faculty who are not on campus, but not on leave, may participate by teleconference or other available technology. Faculty on leave are not required to participate in the meetings. They may communicate their concerns and opinions in writing to the DE Chair or request a phone meeting to discuss issues pertinent to the DE.

Article IX. Quorum
All issues that require a vote must be voted on by at least 50%+1 of all faculty. Successful passage requires a supporting vote of 2/3+ vote from the members voting. Balloting to establish/revise bylaws or graduate program policy can be done either in a meeting of the program, via e-mail, or other web-based balloting technology. The balloting may be done either publicly (such as a voice vote or show of hands), or anonymously. Any member can make a public or confidential request to the program chair for anonymous balloting at any time.
If via e-mail or web-based technology: a) the bylaws must state how motion may be introduced (e.g. by an executive committee, a percentage of membership, etc.), b) the bylaws must clarify how an anonymous vote will be administered, and c) 7 days must be provided for expression of opinions about the proposal prior to the acceptance of votes, and the program must allow 7 days for votes to be returned or before the "polls are closed."

Article X. Order of Business for Meetings
There will be no set format for meetings.

Article XI. Amendments
Amendments to these bylaws may be made in accordance with program’s quorum policy in Article IX. Program members may propose amendments by petition to the program Chair. The program Chair, or relevant program committee, may ask for revisions from the faculty who submitted proposed amendments before forwarding the revisions to the membership for review and voting. Quorum, voting and passage is prescribed in Article IX. All amendments and revisions must be submitted to the Graduate Council for review and approval; changes in the bylaws will become effective upon approval by the Graduate Council.