

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
PROGRAM IN THEOLOGY  
AND EDUCATION**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry (DREPM), now part of the School of Theology and Ministry (STM), offers a program leading to the PhD in Theology and Education. This program is offered in conjunction with Boston College Theology Department in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Lynch School of Education. *The degree is awarded by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.*

The program is intended to educate scholars in the interdisciplinary field of religious education. Participants take courses in theology, education, and religious education; faculty members from each of these areas serve on both the comprehensive examination committee and on the dissertation committee.

Courses, advisement, examinations and dissertations focus on developing the following proficiencies:

1. Integration of scholarly reflection and practical educational concerns.
2. Development of a general level of competence in Bible, systematics, ethics and pastoral theology.
3. Development of a general level of competence in the literature and practice of education, especially educational philosophy and history, curriculum and instruction.
4. Development of a general level of competence in the social sciences most relevant to religious education, especially sociology and psychology.
5. Development of expertise in religious education as a field of scholarship and practice. This should include:
  - a. clarity about the contributions of theology, education and the social sciences to religious education.
  - b. a detailed grasp of the literature of religious education, including historical classics, contemporary writing and ecclesial texts.
6. An ability to engage in research and to write for various publics about religious education.
7. The ability to teach with creativity and active engagement in both academic and pastoral contexts.

Each student should be familiar with the current graduate catalogue of Boston College, including the academic calendar, listing of courses and academic regulations. Courses available at other schools of the Boston Theological Institute are listed in its annual catalogue, published in August each year.

## II. APPLICATION/ADMISSION

The highest reasonable standards of admission to the doctoral program in Theology and Education are maintained.

Degree Applicants apply online at [www.bc.edu/schools/stm/admissions](http://www.bc.edu/schools/stm/admissions) and should be prepared to submit the following:

1. Official college and university transcripts
1. Three (3) letters of recommendation
2. GRE scores (Graduate Record Examination)
3. STM Application Form
4. A resume or curriculum vitae
5. A writing sample consisting of a 20-25-page class essay that reflects research, analysis, and integration of material studied
6. A detailed statement of one's objective in seeking a doctorate in religious education

## III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

### Major Advisor

Upon acceptance into the Doctoral Program, the student converses with the DREPM Department Chair, who facilitates the process of choosing a major advisor, usually within the DREPM Department of the STM. The student and his or her advisor will design a program of studies appropriate to the needs and interests of the student. All of the faculty of the STM are available as consultants with any doctoral student.

### Program of Studies

Ordinarily, the program of studies consists of fifty credit hours beyond the master's degree or ninety credits beyond the bachelor's degree. This minimum requirement may be increased at the recommendation of the STM Doctoral Admissions Committee or a student's major advisor, who may ask the student to supplement his or her background in a particular area or to do more in depth work necessary for the dissertation.

### Residency

The minimum residency requirement for the PhD in Theology and Education is two years of full-time study.

### Scholarships, Fees, and Service Requirement

All students admitted to the doctoral program receive a 4-year stipend of approximately \$20,000/year. In addition, students receive full tuition for 50 credits plus doctoral continuation fees through their fourth year. After the fourth year, each student is charged a doctoral continuation fee, which is equal to 1 credit hour per semester enrolled and for which the student

is responsible.

In exchange for the four-year stipend, PhD students give two years of service to the STM. The expectation for the amount of service is a total of 300 hours per year, which is roughly equivalent to 10 hours/week for two 15-week semesters. Students are not expected to work during the Christmas break or during spring break.

The two-year service requirement needs to be completed in either years 2 and 3, or years 3 and 4, at the student's discretion. Students need to notify the STM Associate Dean for Academic Affairs by April 1 of their first year study which option they intend to pursue.

This service could take the form of teaching assistance, research assistance or administrative assistance. The DREPM Chair and the STM Associate Dean for Academic Affairs determine the content of each student's service, taking into consideration the student's academic and career interests as well as the needs of the STM.

Please note that in the years that a student completes the service requirement, a portion of the stipend (the portion that covers the hours worked) will be taxed.

#### Doctoral Seminar

During the student's two years of residency s/he is enrolled in ED 936.01 Doctoral and Advanced Seminar in Religious Education (3 credits per year, meeting bi-weekly throughout the year). Students beyond their first two years may also participate in the Seminar.

#### Transfer of Credit

Policies, procedures and needed approvals for transfers of credit can be found on the STM website at <http://www.bc.edu/schools/stm/acadprog/stmserv/acadpol.html#transfer>. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences makes final decisions about all transfer of credit requests. NOTE: BTI courses are not considered transfer credits.

#### Candidacy

A student is admitted to doctoral candidacy upon a successful completion of the comprehensive examinations, language requirement and the approval of the dissertation proposal.

### IV. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Reading knowledge of one modern, classic or biblical language other than English is a requirement for the doctorate in theology and education. The choice of language should be related to the student's area of scholarly writing. Reading knowledge of a language for completion of the language requirement can be demonstrated by successful completion of a language course or successful completion of the Boston College Theology Department Language Examination or the language exam of a comparable university department or school of theology.

Students can make arrangements to take the Boston College Theology Department Language Examination.

## V. THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The doctoral examination covers four general areas and three special areas:

- General:            Bible (select either Old Testament or New Testament)  
                         Systematic and Pastoral Theology (for example, Christology, ecclesiology  
                         sacramental theology, comparative theology or theological anthropology)  
                         Ethics (select either fundamental or social ethics)  
                         Education (select higher education, school administration or curriculum and  
                         instruction)
- Special:            Theoretical Foundations of Religious Education  
                         History of Religious Education  
                         Religious Education and the Social Sciences

The questions, including a detailed bibliography, are worked out by the student and his or her advisor and approved by the examining committee. There is a reading list of historical, contemporary and ecclesial texts in religious education that students are required to incorporate into their comprehensive examination question bibliographies, primarily in the Theoretical Foundations of Religious Education and History of Religious Education special areas. See Appendix A for additional information and the religious education reading list.

Congruent with the interdisciplinary nature of the degree, examining committees are composed of at least three members: (1) the major advisor, (2) a faculty member from the Theology Department (GSAS) or the Weston Jesuit Department (STM), and (3) a member from the Lynch School of Education.

The DREPM PhD Educational Policy Committee approves comprehensive examination committees, including any exceptions to the policy regarding committee membership.

The comprehensives are written in a period not exceeding one working week of five (5) days. Normally, one receives the questions on a Monday and returns them by Friday noon. An oral defense is scheduled for as early as possible the following week.

Each question should be answered in an essay of eight to ten pages of text—ten is the maximum length—and a page or two of notes. The examinee should aim to present a carefully argued analysis and synthesis, avoiding lengthy quotations and extraneous data. The oral component offers an opportunity to add clarifications and demonstrate familiarity with the assigned bibliography.

This format suggests that committee members expect more refined essays than is possible in the “bluebook format.” The essays should be typed and may be done in the place the examinee finds most conducive for writing.

Notes:

1. A person may write and defend the Ph.D. comprehensives no more than two times.
2. Both oral and written components are taken into consideration in the evaluation.
3. Criteria for assessment:
  - a. The general areas should reflect a solid knowledge of fundamental issues, methods and theories.
  - b. The special areas should reflect a more extensive grasp of issues, methods, and theories.
4. Consistent with university policy, the examination is graded as "Pass with distinction," "Pass," or "Fail."

## VI. DISSERTATION

Congruent with the interdisciplinary nature of the degree, dissertation committees are composed of at least three members: (1) the major advisor, (2) a faculty member from the Theology Department (GSAS) or the Weston Jesuit Department (STM), and (3) a member from the Lynch School of Education.

The DREPM PhD Educational Policy Committee approves dissertation committees, including any exceptions to the policy regarding committee membership.

### Dissertation Proposal

1. After completion of the comprehensive examination and fulfillment of the language requirement, the student prepares a dissertation proposal. Appendix B provides a suggested format for this.
2. When the proposal is ready, the advisor will usually schedule a proposal hearing with the other members of the dissertation committee. The proposal should be available to each committee member one week prior to the hearing.
3. At the hearing, the dissertation committee decides whether or not to give formal, written approval to the proposal. It also discusses procedures for guiding the candidate in writing the dissertation.

### Dissertation Defense

1. After establishing with the other committee members that the dissertation is ready for defense and scheduling the defense, the major advisor asks the DREPM Department Chair to publicize the oral. The dissertation defense is public.

2. Five copies of a dissertation abstract (see Appendix C) should be submitted to the office of the DREPM Department Chair no later than one month before the date of the defense. He or she will have copies prepared for those who wish to attend the defense.
3. The dissertation may be modified as a result of the defense, but it must be complete in all respects and editorially acceptable for final approval at the time of the defense.
4. Committee members must have a final draft at least three weeks before the defense.

#### Additional Steps for the Defense and Graduation

Before arranging for the defense, the doctoral candidate should check with the STM's Assistant Director of Financial Aid and Academic Services to see that all is in order for graduation (for example, all courses complete, requirements met, fees paid, and application for graduation made). He/she should obtain current information for dissertation processing from the Office of the Dean, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, website [www.bc.edu/gsas](http://www.bc.edu/gsas). It is strongly recommended that the student submit his/her dissertation online, following all instructions on the GSAS website.

#### Time Limit

1. All requirements for the doctorate must be completed within eight consecutive years from the commencement of doctoral studies.
2. An extension may be granted upon departmental recommendation and with the approval of the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Petitions for extension are available at the STM Service Center.

#### VII. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students who wish to interrupt their program for one or more semesters must file a form in the university's Office of Student Services, indicating expected dates of the leave and having the written approval of the GSAS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. When students on leave are ready to resume their program of studies, they must apply for re-admission at least 6 weeks prior to the semester in which they expect to enroll. Whether or not the leave time is to be considered a portion of the total time limit for the degree is a matter to be agreed upon initially between the student and the DREPM Department Chair, approved by the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Science, and stated on the "Leave of Absence" form. "Leave of Absence" forms may be obtained in the STM Service Center.

## VIII. PLACEMENT SERVICES

Doctoral students who wish to have a file available for circulation and who wish to be notified of job opportunities should contact the Career Center:

38 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston College  
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167  
(617) 552-3435

## IX. CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Students should notify the STM Assistant Director of Financial Aid and Academic Services of any change of address and update this information in Agora. International students are also required to notify the Office of International Students and Scholars, 21 Campanella Way, of any change of address.

## X. UNIVERSITY JURISDICTION

A. The Educational Policy Committee: An Educational Policy Committee, appointed by the Chair of the DREPM Department, and composed of members of the DREPM Department, the Theology Department, the Weston Jesuit Department, and the Lynch School of Education, sets internal policy, including requests for adjustments to these regulations, approval of comprehensive examination committees, and approval of dissertation committee.

B. Admissions Committee: The Doctoral Admissions Committee, composed of members of the DREPM Department, the Department of Theology, the Weston Jesuit Department, and the Lynch School of Education, evaluates and determines admission to the program.

C. All decisions are subject to the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

## XI. USEFUL CAMPUS ADDRESSES

- School of Theology and Ministry, 140 Commonwealth Ave., Chestnut Hill, MA 02467 (U.S. Mail) or 9 Lake St., Brighton, MA 02135 (Deliveries)
- Dean's Office, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, McGuinn 221, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467
- Dept. of Theology, 21 Campanella Way, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467
- Lynch School of Education, Campion Hall, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467
- Univ. Registrar's Office, Lyons 101, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

- Office of International Students and Scholars, 21 Campanella Way, Boston College,  
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

## XII. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A - READING LIST IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

At least fifteen of the following works should appear on a student's bibliography for the Ph.D. in Theology and Education Comprehensive Exams. Specifically, students choose twelve sources from the list of historical and contemporary texts, and are required to include all three of the works in the list of ecclesial texts. Typically, one will locate the concentration of these readings within the essays on the Theoretical Foundations of Religious Education and the History of Religious Education. However, if appropriate, some may also be located under any one of the other five essays, as long as the latter retain substantive bibliography in their own specific fields of discourse.

In addition to the ecclesial documents listed below, all candidates are to add at least two more ecclesial works that reflect their own denominational or cultural context, or specific area of interest.

#### **Historical Texts**

Horace Bushnell,	<i>Christian Nurture (Part I)</i>
George Albert Coe,	<i>The Social Theory of Religious Education</i>
Josef Jungmann,	<i>The Good News Yesterday and Today</i>
H. Shelton Smith,	<i>Faith and Nurture</i>
Harrison S. Elliott,	<i>Can Religious Education be Christian?</i>
Lewis Sherrill,	<i>The Gift of Power</i>
Iris Cully,	<i>The Dynamics of Christian Education</i>
Sarah Little,	<i>To Set One's Heart</i>
C. Ellis Nelson,	<i>Where Faith Begins</i>
Alphons Nebreda,	<i>Kerygma in Crisis</i>
Gerard Sloyan,	<i>Shaping The Christian Message</i>
Gabriel Moran,	<i>Catechesis of Revelation</i>
Michael Warren,	<i>Sourcebook in Modern Catechetics</i>
Marianne Sawicki,	<i>The Gospel in History</i>

#### **Contemporary Texts**

Gabriel Moran,	<i>The Present Revelation</i>
John Westerhoff,	<i>Will Our Children Have Faith</i>
Mary Boys,	<i>Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions</i>
Seymour and Miller,	<i>Mapping Christian Education</i>
Mary Elizabeth Moore,	<i>Education for Continuity and Change</i>

Maria Harris,	<i>Teaching and Religious Imagination</i>
Thomas Groome,	<i>Christian Religious Education</i>
Parker Palmer,	<i>To Know as We are Known</i>
James Michael Lee,	<i>The Shape of Religious Instruction</i>
Padraic O'Hare, ed.	<i>Foundations of Religious Education</i>
Charles Foster,	<i>Educating Congregations</i>
Richard Osmer,	<i>A Teachable Spirit</i>
Daniel Schipani,	<i>Religious Education Encounters Liberation Theology</i>
Anne Streaty Wimberley,	<i>Soul Stories: African American Christian Education</i>

**Ecclesial Texts** (required of all)

Pope John Paul II,	<i>Catechesi Tradendae - Apostolic Exhortation on Catechesis</i>
Pope Paul VI,	<i>Evangeliu Nuntiandi - On Evangelization in the Modern World</i>
NCCB,	<i>General Directory of Catechesis</i> (1998)

**APPENDIX B - FORMAT OF DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

Title of Dissertation

Student's Name and Major Field of Concentration

Name of Dissertation Director

Issue or Problem to be Investigated

The primary purposes of this section are to describe the issue or concern that will be investigated and to explain why it is worthy of consideration. Crucial terms or concepts should also be described in this section. One way to state the problem is to list one or more questions that the study is intended to answer. It is also possible to state the issue as a hypothesis to be tested. This section should state clearly the benefits of addressing the problem and/or the negative consequences of not addressing the problem.

Context or Background of the Problem to be Investigated

This section indicates the relation of this study to the developing stream of religious educational thought. It may discuss the prior studies in the same area, a field situation to which the study relates, or the conceptual framework out of which the study arises. This

section should make clear how the study will extend religious educational theory and practice. It should also make clear how the present study departs from or adds to present knowledge. It should demonstrate what light already has been thrown upon the question to be investigated and what doubtful points remain to be investigated.

#### Summary of Approach

The primary purpose of this section is to outline a response or solution to the issue or concern raised by the investigation. The section should include a statement of the approach or method of the dissertation, and a summary of the dissertation chapters or sketch of the argument presented.

#### Resources to be Used

In this section the student should indicate major bibliographical and other resources to be used in the dissertation. This can include, in addition to bibliography, persons and disciplines of special importance to the development of the ideas treated in the dissertation.

N.B. The foregoing format outline provides a general guide to follow in drawing up the dissertation proposal. In some cases the context or background of the problem may need to be stated before the issue or problem is presented. Overall, students develop their proposal in consultation with a major advisor.

### APPENDIX C - FORMAT FOR ABSTRACT

A dissertation abstract should be completed once the dissertation is ready for the defense hearing. Five (5) copies of the abstract should be submitted to the Office of the STM Associate Dean for Academic Affairs no later than one month before the date of the defense.

1. Title of Dissertation
2. Student's Name and Major Field of Concentration
3. Name of Dissertation Director
4. Dissertation Abstract (double space): summarizing the theses, themes and proposals of the dissertation.
5. Date of Dissertation Defense

### APPENDIX D – STAGES OF DOCTORAL STUDY

Stage 1 (usually year 1 & 2)

- Admission
- Orientation to Boston, Boston College, STM, and doctoral program
- Meet regularly with academic advisor to select courses and converse about future directions
- Engage in coursework
- Participate in ED936 Doctoral and Advanced Seminar in Religious Education during first two years of residency
- Participate in scheduled doctoral student - faculty conversations about comprehensives, proposals and other aspects of the doctoral program
- Participate in informal doctoral student gatherings for support and information
- Complete language requirement

#### Stage 2 (usually year 3)

- Completion of coursework
- Establish comprehensive examination committee
- Prepare and take comprehensive exams under the direction of academic advisor
- Establish dissertation committee
- Participate in scheduled community conversations about comprehensives, proposals and other aspects of the doctoral program
- Participate in informal student gatherings for support and information

#### Stage 3 (year 4 & beyond)

- Prepare dissertation proposal and have proposal hearing
- Write dissertation
- Submit and defend dissertation as described earlier in this document
- Graduation