



# Religious Education Graduate Handbook



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# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GRADUATE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

## Administration

Dean of Religious Education	Scott Esplin	370A JSB/422-2736
Associate Dean	Tyler Griffin	370C JSB/422-3290
Associate Dean	Gaye Strathearn	370D JSB/422-3290
Ancient Scripture Chair	Shon Hopkin	375A JSB/422-2445
Church History and Doctrine Chair	Robert Freeman	375B JSB/422-3368

## Graduate Council

Dean of Religious Education	Scott Esplin	370A JSB/422-2736
Associate Dean over Graduate Studies	Gaye Strathearn	370D JSB/422-3290
Graduate Coordinator	Lincoln H. Blumell	210F JSB/422-2497
Ancient Scripture Department Chair	Shon Hopkin	375A JSB/422-2445
Church History Department Chair	Robert Freeman	375B JSB/422-3368

<b>Graduate Secretary</b>	Adam Hellewell	370 JSB/422-3290
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## DEGREE PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Graduate Program of Religious Education at Brigham Young University. Your pursuit of a Masters degree in Religious Education will offer you graduate level courses from both the Department of Ancient Scripture and the Department of Church History and Doctrine. Together with these courses, you will also have the opportunity to complete a Masters project selected by you and approved by the Religious Education Graduate Program

Your graduate work will be a rewarding experience that benefits you. This graduate handbook contains instructions and guidelines for successfully completing the graduate program in Religious Education. Carefully read and familiarize yourself with this handbook, as well as the general handbook printed by Graduate Studies at BYU. As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to know and understand the policies and regulations governing the Masters degree program in Religious Education and the general requirements of Brigham Young University Graduate Studies.

The faculties of Ancient Scripture and Church History and Doctrine welcome you to the graduate program and look forward to helping you successfully complete your degree.

## AIMS OF A BYU EDUCATION

The mission of Brigham Young University is “to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life” (The Mission Statement of Brigham Young University). To this end, BYU seeks to develop students of faith, intellect, and character who have the skills and the desire to continue learning and to serve others throughout their lives. These are the common aims of all education at BYU. Both those who teach in the classroom and those who direct activities outside the classroom are responsible for contributing to this complete educational vision. In sum, a BYU education should

be (1) spiritually strengthening, (2) intellectually enlarging, and (3) character building, leading to (4) lifelong learning and service. (Taken from the BYU 2011–2012 Graduate Catalogue)

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students who complete the degree will be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate an increasing understanding of the scriptures, doctrine and history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- 2) Teach their students the doctrine and principles of the Restored Gospel as found in the scriptures and the words of the modern prophets.
- 3) Demonstrate and teach how to study a scriptural, doctrinal or historical text, including the ability to critically evaluate source material in the search for answers and resolutions that build faith in the teachings, doctrine, practices and history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- 4) Demonstrate an increasing ability to research and write about the scriptures, doctrine and history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- 5) Evaluate approaches, methods, and philosophies for teaching and researching religion and scriptural texts.

Graduate classes are more advanced and rigorous than undergraduate courses in Religious Education. Professors will expect each graduate student to perform at a high level of preparation and will expect students to regularly attend class and engage the course material through meaningful class discussion and critical thinking beyond what is expected of an undergraduate student.

## **FUNDING AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR TUITION AND FEES**

Seminaries and Institutes (S&I) will pay tuition up to 12 credit hours per academic year and 6 hours of project credits for students who are full-time employees. S&I requires full-time employees to pay the tuition for each semester/term with out-of-pocket funds. Upon successful completion of each semester or term, S&I will reimburse each graduate student up to a maximum of 12 credit hours per year. To be reimbursed each student will need to complete and submit the tuition reimbursement form found on the Church Educational System web page. Payment for additional credit hours beyond 12 credit hours per academic year is the responsibility of the student. Typically, there will be two years during which students will have to take more than 12 credit hours to complete the program on time, and thus students should plan on having some out-of-pocket tuition expense. All fees beyond the costs for course work and the six hours of project credit will be paid for by the student. Therefore, it is advantageous for each student who is full-time with S&I to complete their project within one year following the end of course work in order to avoid additional out-of-pocket expenses.

Students who are part-time employees in S&I and students with no affiliation with S&I will not receive a tuition reimbursement from S&I during their course of study.

A modest, taxable, stipend is given to each student, regardless of status in S&I, per semester or term during the time they are completing coursework. Books and textbooks required for each course are to be purchased by students.

## **TIME LIMITS AND MINIMUM REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Time Limits**

The master's degree should be completed at the end of three years from the beginning of course work (two years of course work and one year for project completion).

If students require longer than three years to complete the master's degree, the maximum amount of time BYU Graduate Studies will allow is five years from the beginning of coursework. After the five years, students who have not completed their degree will be dropped from the program.

### **Minimum Registration for Project Credits**

Once students have completed the mandatory course work, they must register for a minimum of two credit hours of REL E 698R (project credits) each semester (i.e. Fall and Winter) until their project is completed. They must also register for a total of two credit hours of REL E 698 during the spring and summer terms until their project is completed, as well. CLARIFICATION: Students may register for one credit of REL E 698R for spring term and one credit of REL E 698R for summer term, or they may register for two credits of REL E 698R for spring or summer term and no credits of REL E 698R during the other spring or summer term. In other words, you can be flexible as to how you register for REL E 698R credits during spring and summer terms, so long as you have a combined total of two credits. Students who fail to register for the required REL E 698R credits during either the fall or winter semesters, or spring/summer terms will be dropped from the program and will need to reapply through the Graduate Studies Office for readmission to the program. See Part C. Resuming Graduate Study below.

Additionally, students must also be enrolled in two hours of RELE 698R credit during the semester or term they defend their project. Religious Education does not hold project defenses between the last day of class instruction of Summer Term and the first day of class instruction of Fall Semester.

### **Resuming Graduate Study**

With the approval of the Associate Dean of Religious Education who oversees the Graduate Program and the Graduate Coordinator, students who are dropped from the program for failure to meet the minimum registration requirement may submit an Application to Resume Graduate Study Form and a Re-application Honor Code Commitment Form (GS Form 6 and 6a available online at <http://www.byu.edu.gradstudies>) and pay a \$600 out of pocket, non-refundable, non-reimbursed, processing fee.

### **Distance Learning**

All students must attend classes in person on the BYU campus for the first two summer terms of their study. Students who cannot reasonably travel to BYU-Provo for courses taught other semesters (i.e. Fall and Winter) must enroll and participate in those courses through distance learning arrangements online. If students live within 50 miles of BYU campus it is expected that they will attend in person

during Fall and Winter semesters. Relocation and housing for the two summers of on-campus courses are at the student's own expense.

## REQUIRED COURSES

Number	Title	Credit Hours
REL E 500	Education Philosophy and Values in Rel. Ed.	1
REL E 501	Scripture Teaching	2
REL E 595	Research Methods in Religious Education	2
REL E 606	The Eternal Family: Doctrines, Principles, and Practices	3
REL E 608	Introduction to Biblical Hebrew and Greek	3
REL E 609	Graduate Seminar on the Pearl of Great Price	1
REL E 610	Graduate Seminar on the Old Testament	3
REL E 611	Graduate Seminar on the New Testament	3
REL E 621	Graduate Seminar on the Book of Mormon	3
REL E 624	Doctrine and Covenants Graduate Seminar	3
REL E 625	LDS Church History Graduate Seminar	3
REL E 632	World Religions	3
REL E 640	History of the Christian Church	3
REL E 650	Doctrinal Contributions of the Restoration	2
REL E 698R	Project	6

Total Course Work Hours: 35

Minimum Project Hours: 6

Minimum Credit Hours: 41

### SCHEDULE OF GRADUATE COURSES: 2022–2025

Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
<b>2024</b> REL E 595 (2.0)	<b>2024</b> REL E 500 (1.0)* REL E 606 (3.0) REL E 609 (1.0) REL E 610 (3.0) REL E 650 (2.0) *REL A 510R will substitute	<b>2024</b> REL E 608 (3.0)	<b>2025</b> REL E 611 (3.0)
<b>2025</b> REL E 501 (2.0)	<b>2025</b> REL E 621 (3.0) REL E 624 (3.0) REL E 632 (3.0)	<b>2025</b> REL E 640 (3.0)	<b>2026</b> REL E 625 (3.0)
<b>2026</b> REL E 698R (1.0) Comprehensive Exams	<b>2026</b> REL E 698R (1.0)	<b>2026</b> REL E 698R (2.0)	<b>2027</b> REL E 698R (2.0)

## **ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND STUDENT EVALUATIONS**

### **Graduate Time-line**

Masters students beginning their course work in the Spring Term of 2024 should complete the following tasks no later than the listed dates:

**By January 2026:** Project topic approved by the Associate Dean of Religious Education and the Graduate Coordinator.

**By February 2026:** Project Chair and committee members selected

**By March 2026:** Prospectus written and approved by Project Committee, the Associate Dean of Religious Education and the Graduate Coordinator.

**May/June 2026:** Complete Written Comprehensive Exams

**Between June 2026 and March 2027:** Project defended.

It is to your advantage to complete the project as soon as possible, since Seminary and Institutes will only pay for a maximum of six credit hours of project work. Meaning: beginning with Spring Term 2026, you will be responsible to pay for credits of project hours each semester or term until you have completed and defended your project.

Students should also be aware of important dates/deadlines for application to graduate, project defense and project submission. These deadlines can be found online at <https://gradstudies.byu.edu/page/graduation>

### **Mandatory Meeting with the Graduate Coordinator**

During the first two years of course work, students will be required to meet once a semester or term with the Graduate Coordinator. The purpose of this meeting is to review each student's progress and performance in the classroom, discuss any problem or concerns (if any), and answer questions. These meetings will also be an opportunity to discuss potential project topics, the selection of committee chairs, as well as ways to improve the graduate program in Religious Education. The Graduate Secretary or Coordinator will schedule these meetings between students and the Graduate Coordinator.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating Student Progress**

Two times during the academic school year, the Associate Dean and the Graduate Coordinator will meet to evaluate each student's academic performance. The evaluations are based on classroom performance, grades, feedback from professors, and project work. These two evaluations are reported

online to the Graduate Office at BYU.

Student performance is rated as “Satisfactory,” “Marginal,” or “Unsatisfactory.” Students who do not receive satisfactory ratings will be notified in writing and will be required to meet with the Associate Dean and the Graduate Coordinator in order to determine the appropriate actions to achieve satisfactory ratings in the next evaluation. Students receiving two consecutive unsatisfactory or marginal evaluations will be terminated from the program.

## **COMPREHENSIVE WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS**

The written examination is required for all graduate students in the Religious Education Master of Arts Program. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is both to evaluate the student’s understanding and knowledge of some of the core materials covered during their coursework and to prepare students for their project. Comprehensive exams are to be taken during the Spring Term following the completion of coursework. The exams are an important part of the graduate program and allow students to review, synthesize, and clarify important concepts, ideas, and key doctrines and teachings from their coursework as well as prepare them for their project.

The comprehensive exams consist of a major and minor field. For the major field students will be tested on the following areas:

**1. REL E 610: Graduate Seminar on the Old Testament**

Students will be given three essay questions, two of them will appear on the exam.

**2. REL E 611: Graduate Seminar on the New Testament**

Students will be given three essay questions, two of them will appear on the exam.

**3. REL E 621: Graduate Seminar on the Book of Mormon**

Students will be given three essay questions, two of them will appear on the exam.

**4. REL E 624: Doctrine and Covenants Graduate Seminar**

Students will be given three essay questions, two of them will appear on the exam.

Students will write a total of eight essays in the four exams for the major field. The exams are closed book with an essay answer format. Students have three hours for each exam.

The minor field is directly related to the student’s project and is designed to help the student attain competence in a body of literature that will relate contextually and methodologically to their project topic. In consultation with their faculty advisor a reading list of appropriate monographs and articles will be assembled. The reading list for the minor field should not exceed 1,000 pages and in certain cases could even include some readings from previous courses. Based on the reading list the advisor will provide the student with two broad essay questions to guide them as they work through their reading list. One of the questions will appear on the comprehensive exam. The exam is closed book with an essay answer format. Students have two hours for the exam. The minor exam is taken after all the major field exams are complete.

The questions for the major field are to be assigned to the students by no later than March 15 of the last semester of coursework. The questions for the minor field are to be assigned to the students by no later than April 1 of the last semester of coursework. The comprehensive exams are pass/fail and require students to successfully pass each set of questions submitted by their advisor and graduate professors. Students who fail any of the exam questions will have one opportunity for a retake. Failure to pass the question(s) on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the program. Students will be notified in writing of the exam results.

Comprehensive exams will be administered by the Graduate Coordinator and have to be finished before the end of the Spring Term following the completion of coursework. Students may take a maximum of two exams on one day. Once the first exam is taken students have seven days to complete the remaining exams.

## **PROJECT**

The culmination of your MA in Religious Education is the successful completion and defense of an MA project. There are a few kinds of acceptable projects for the MA in Religious Education. The most common is a thesis-like project that will take the form of a written project tantamount to an extended research paper where a question is addressed via a critical examination of both primary and secondary sources (see: “What is a written MA project?” below). Other kinds of acceptable projects may include a translation and/or critical edition of an unpublished document or the development of teaching and learning materials for the Religious Education classroom. In the latter case, a project could even include the development and launch of an online resource or App that helps foster the aims and goals of the Religious Education classroom. In the cases of non-thesis-like projects a student must receive approval to pursue such projects by the graduate coordinator as well as the supervising faculty, who has established competence in the proposed project field, prior to the submission of the prospectus.

**Note:** for students who are planning, or even considering, to continue their education at a doctoral level the thesis-like written project will be most beneficial. Not only will it effectively serve as a precursor to a doctoral dissertation, but it will also provide the student with an appropriate writing sample for their doctoral application.

### **What is a written MA project?**

A written master’s project is a piece of original scholarship produced under the direction of a faculty advisor in Religious Education. In initial consultation with the graduate coordinator and then a faculty advisor the project’s topic and scope are to be determined. A master’s project is similar to a doctoral dissertation, but it is considerably shorter and more narrowly focused. As a rule of thumb, a master’s project should be publishable as a single article, though it might be longer than a typical article; a doctoral dissertation is generally equivalent to at least four articles or a monograph. Like a good journal article, a master’s project will address a specific question and will bring new evidence or arguments to bear upon the topic from both primary and secondary sources. The project should

therefore demonstrate a thorough awareness of the topic's historical, interpretive, and perhaps even theoretical context. It is also imperative that a MA project engages with contemporary scholarship, it is not good enough for a project merely to summarize scholarship. Thus, the written project should represent a genuine contribution to the question it is addressing and a real advancement in scholarship. While it is anticipated that a completed project should be of such quality that it can be published in a journal (academic or LDS), and students are encouraged to be in dialogue with their advisor about this possibility throughout the writing process and write the project with an eye toward publication, publication is not a requirement for graduation.

### **Length of a written MA project?**

While there is no specified requirement, typically the written project will be between twenty-five and forty pages in length double spaced (up to 20,000 words) not including cover page, front matter (i.e. abstract, acknowledgements, table of contents, list of common abbreviations, etc.) and bibliography. All written projects should have the following:

1. It should begin with a clear and succinct statement of the *problem or issue* to be addressed, and a brief outline of the text or texts relevant to the problem. This statement may not come easily and requires a good deal of thought; but the clearer you are able to state the *issue*, the easier it will be to determine the appropriate *method* for addressing the issue, and the more intelligible will be the relationship of the various parts of the paper one to another.
2. *Status quaestionis*: The paper should provide a *succinct* account of the scholarly positions that have, up to now, been taken on the problem. You can do this by organizing the *status quaestionis* historically or chronologically (i.e., by tracing the history of the debate on the problem); or you can proceed analytically, breaking the problem down into its logical components and aligning scholarly opinion on this template.
3. A discussion of relevant *background issues* (e.g., legal issues; literary antecedents; issues of historicity; heuristic definitions of relevant phenomena; etc.),
4. An *analysis* of the texts identified in #1 in light of the history of scholarship (#2) and the relevant background issues (#3).
5. A conclusion indicating which of the available interpretive options seems to be the most cogent (and *why*).
6. A representative bibliography. The bibliography can be classified, and the longer and more diverse it is, the more helpful classification is. It is sometimes useful to distinguish primary texts from secondary treatments; some writers also separate *Hilfsmittel* (lexicas, concordances, etc.) from primary and secondary texts. It is imperative, however, that your citations be *complete, consistent* and *accurate*.

### **Finding a Topic**

Students who pursue the written project should begin thinking about possible topics early in their academic program. Good research questions often have their origins in seminar papers or class discussions. Keep an idea file where you jot down potential research ideas. Always be on the lookout for new data that might help provide new insights into a topic, or for past research that might be productively replicated in other circumstances. Discussing possible projects with the graduate coordinator or faculty specialists from your area of interest is especially important, since your work must be supported and guided by the resources of the university and the expertise of the faculty.

### **Project Defense**

The culminating examination of the MA in Religious Education is a formally scheduled project defense, an oral examination of the student's written project by their faculty advisor and two committee members.

### **Project Advisory Committee Selection**

A critical step in completing the project is selecting a project committee chair and two other committee members. The committee has the major responsibility of guiding the student in writing the prospectus and completing the project. Your committee will be comprised of faculty members who have strong backgrounds in your project area. The Associate Dean over the Graduate Program and the Graduate Coordinator will approve the project chairs. Project chairs must also be approved with the department chairs of Ancient Scripture or Church History and Doctrine.

Your project chair must be a full-time faculty member from either the Department of Ancient Scripture or Church History and Doctrine (see list of faculty specialists). You may, however, request one project committee member from outside of Religious Education, or a retired faculty member from Religious Education, if your project topic requires their expertise and knowledge. Until the Project Committee is formed, the Graduate Coordinator will assist you.

### **The Role of the Project Chair**

The chair of your project advisory committee has the final say in all matters pertaining to your project. While the input and recommendations of the other two project committee members are important and valuable, it is critical that students work directly with their project chair. It will be the project chair who determines when the prospectus is approved and when the project is completed and ready to be defended.

### **Working with Your Committee**

Completing a project and working closely with the committee chair and the project committee members can be a very rewarding experience. Indeed, some students create lasting friendships with the people who serve on their committees and learn a great deal from these mentoring relationships. Through the process of completing the project, receiving feedback from the committee, and implementing committee recommendations to the project, students develop both their writing and thinking skills.

To help create a continued, positive working environment with the project committee, the following

recommendations should be carefully noted:

1. Stay in contact with your project chair. It is inexcusable for a graduate student to make their committee chair “chase after them,” in order to receive updates on student progress. A short email or phone call to the committee chair at regular intervals (which can be determined by the chair and the graduate student) is critical in appraising the chair of any problems, concerns, and or questions the student may have. Please note, however, that committee chairs are full time faculty members and have classes to teach and research projects of their own. Do not drop by their offices unannounced or without an appointment.
2. Be patient with your committee and give them a reasonable amount of time to review, critique, and respond to the work you have submitted. Generally speaking, committee members will take around two weeks to review and critique student submissions. If students have concerns about the length of time the committee is taking to review their work, they should speak directly with the project chair, who in turn can speak to the project committee members in order to resolve any problems.
3. Remember it is the project chair (with input from the other project committee members) who will determine when the project is completed and ready to defend. Do not pressure your committee to defend the project before it is completed, and your chair is satisfied with the work.

### **Faculty Specialists**

<i>Kenneth L. Alford</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Latter-day Saints serving in military conflicts, Hyrum Smith, Utah War, Civil War
<i>Alexander L. Baugh</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, LDS Church History 1805-1844, Specialization in Missouri Period, 1831-1839
<i>Daniel L. Belnap</i>	Old Testament, Book of Mormon, Ancient Near Eastern Studies
<i>Lincoln H. Blumell</i>	New Testament, Early Christianity, Greek and Coptic Papyrology and Epigraphy
<i>Jeffrey R. Chadwick</i>	Old Testament, New Testament, Archaeology and Historical Geography of the Land of Israel, Jewish Studies, Islam.
<i>Rachel Cope</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Nineteenth-Century Church History, New York Period
<i>Gerrit J. Dirkmaat</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Nineteenth Century Church History, Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Early Utah Period, American History
<i>Justin Dyer</i>	Marriage and Family, Research Methodology
<i>Amy Easton-Flake</i>	Book of Mormon, Nineteenth-Century Bible Reception, Women in The Old Testament

<i>Mark Ellison</i>	New Testament, Christian texts, artifacts, iconography, and practices
<i>Scott D. Esplin</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, History of Church Education, Twentieth Century LDS Church history.
<i>Nicholas J. Frederick</i>	Book of Mormon, New Testament, Intertextuality of Scripture
<i>Lee Harms</i>	Military Ministry, Clinical Pastoral education, World Religions
<i>Barbara Morgan Gardner</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, The Eternal Family, and Teachings of the Living Prophets
<i>Alonzo L. Gaskill</i>	World Religions, Early Christian History, Non-Latter-day Saint Scriptural canon, Scriptural and Liturgical Symbolism
<i>Michael A. Goodman</i>	Marriage and Family, Adolescent Development, Mission Preparation, LDS Doctrine
<i>Matthew Grey</i>	New Testament, Jesus and his Jewish Setting, Archeology, Jesus in Film, Joseph Smith's Study and Uses of Hebrew
<i>Tyler Griffin</i>	Book of Mormon, digital learning resources to enhance scriptural immersion and understanding
<i>Casey Griffiths</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, History of religious education among Latter-day Saints, the history of the Church in the Pacific, and diverse movements associated with the Restoration
<i>Steve Harper</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, First Vision
<i>J. B. Haws</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Mormonism in Twentieth and Twenty-first century, American History
<i>Andrew H. Hedges</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, LDS and the Environment
<i>John Hilton</i>	Book of Mormon, Scriptural Textual Analysis (especially Book of Mormon), Teaching Pedagogy. Crucifixion
<i>Shon Hopkin</i>	Old Testament, Book of Mormon, Ancient Near East, Arabic Studies
<i>Kerry M. Hull</i>	Book of Mormon, Linguistic Anthropology, Ethno-ornithology, Ancient Religious Systems, Cosmology
<i>Eric D. Huntsman</i>	New Testament, Johannine Writings, Pauline Epistles, and

	Luke-Acts, Koine and New Testament Greek, Greek and Roman History and Classical Literature; Early Christianity and the Roman World; Women in Classical Antiquity.
<i>Frank F. Judd Jr.</i>	New Testament, Latter-day Saint Interpretation of Scripture, Historical Geography of the Bible, the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies.
<i>Byran B. Korth</i>	Marriage and Family, early childhood development & parenting, child & adolescent spiritual development, family proclamation, LDS doctrine & the family
<i>Jared W. Ludlow</i>	Old Testament, New Testament, Intertestamental Period (Second Temple Judaism), Early Christianity
<i>Craig Manscill</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Nineteenth Century Church History, Illinois Church History 1830-1846; South Pacific Church History.
<i>Michael H. MacKay</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Nineteenth Century Church History, Joseph Smith
<i>Byron R. Merrill</i>	Book of Mormon, Textual Analysis, Doctrine, Moroni, Old Testament: Administration and Keys of Elijah
<i>Kerry M. Muhlestein</i>	Old Testament, Pearl of Great Price, Isaiah, Israelite History, Egyptian History, Egyptian Archaeology, Historiography of Egyptology, History of Near Eastern Empires
<i>Lloyd Newell</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Church History and Doctrine, Lives and Teachings of the Living Prophets, Marriage and Family
<i>Mark D. Ogletree</i>	Marriage and Family, Mental Health, Fatherhood, Living Prophets, 20th Century Church History, Adolescent Religious Faith Development,
<i>Mauro Properzi</i>	Christianity (Theology & Spirituality), Emotions, Interfaith dialogue
<i>Aaron Schade</i>	Old Testament, Northwest Semitic Inscriptions
<i>David R. Seely</i>	Old Testament, Pentateuch, Prophets, and Poetry, Intertestamental Period, Hellenism and Judaism; Dead Sea Scrolls, New Testament: Gospels.
<i>Joseph M. Spencer</i>	Book of Mormon, Scriptural Hermeneutics, Latter-day Saint Theology, Philosophy

<i>Gaye Strathearn</i>	New Testament, Early Christian Origins: Gospel of Matthew, Valentinian Bridal Chamber.
<i>Anthony R. Sweat</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Religious education pedagogy, LDS Art, LDS Doctrine
<i>Charles Swift</i>	Book of Mormon, New Testament, Scripture as Sacred Literature, Creative writing
<i>Jordan Watkins</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Nineteenth-Century LDS History, Nineteenth-Century American History, Intellectual History
<i>Bradley R. Wilcox</i>	Book of Mormon, Literacy, Onomastics, Pedagogy
<i>Mary Jane Woodger</i>	Doctrine & Covenants, Twentieth Century Church History, Teachings of the Living, Prophets, LDS Biographies: David O. McKay Era, LDS Women's History, LDS Church Education.
<i>Fred E. Woods</i>	Old Testaments, Mormon migration in the Nineteenth Century.

## **Project Prospectus**

Once the project has been approved, you may begin work on a prospectus. The prospectus is a five to eight-page (double spaced) paper, which should contain the following elements:

1. A clearly stated question or problem you are seeking an answer. This is a concise, succinct project statement and will give the reader a clear picture of what it is you intend to accomplish.
2. Justification and relevance of the project. Where item one's intent is to give a clear statement of your intent, this section allows you to explain why the project is important and relevant. It answers the questions, "Why is this project important," and "What contributions will this make?"
3. A statement of scope and limitations of the project. This part of the prospectus identifies the scope and the limits of the project. It informs the reader about the breadth of the work and locks in the parameters of the work, assuring that no additional demands will be made on the work.
4. Preliminary annotated bibliography. In this section of the prospectus, key sources to be used in the project are listed. This section does more than just list the primary and secondary sources pertinent to the project. It also evaluates the sources and explores their strengths and weaknesses. This portion is important, since it will show the project committee that students are aware of the major sources/authors in the field, as well as the current trend of thought, theory, and critical analysis dealing with the project.
5. A statement of methodology. This section details the methodology which will be used in conducting the research for, and the work to complete the project.

6. Outlined plan of development. This section lists the general outline of the project, and how you plan to accomplish it. For example, if your project will be a thesis-like document, then this portion could consist of a general outline of your how your written project will be written and will include potential sections with short descriptions of contents for each section.

7. Timeline. Attach a detailed timeline for completing the project, reflecting Graduate Studies deadlines, as well as your project committee deadlines. It needs to be completed by March of the following year.

### **Prospectus Approval and Appropriate Signatures**

Once the prospectus receives the chair's approval, it is ready for the other two project committee members evaluation and approval. Copies of the prospectus should be sent to the committee members and a meeting scheduled with all three committee members in order to discuss the prospectus in detail and make changes, if necessary.

After the project committee has given their approval for the prospectus, students must take copies of the prospectus to the Associate Dean overseeing the graduate program and the Graduate Coordinator. These two individuals will read the prospectus and make recommendations (if necessary). Their approvals and signatures are also required.

In turn, the Associate Dean will take the prospectus to a meeting of the Religious Education Administrative Council for their review and approval. The graduate secretary for Religious Education will also send copies of the prospectus to the appropriate S&I Administrator for their approval.

In sum, students must have their prospectus approved by their project committee, the Associate Dean and Graduate Coordinator, the Religious Education Administrative Council, and Seminary and Institutes. Once these approvals have been given, students may begin work on their project.

Important: Make two photocopies of your signed prospectus and give one to your project chair and one to the Religious Education Graduate Secretary, who will include the signed prospectus form in your file. **See Appendix for form.**

## Oral Defense of Project

After the project has been completed and approved by the project committee (with the chair giving the final approval), an oral project defense will be scheduled. Though the chair takes the lead in scheduling the defense (date, time, location), this should be done in collaboration with the committee, student, the graduate coordinator, and especially the graduate secretary. Typically, defenses should be scheduled and announced at least one week prior to the date of defense.

Once the student has submitted their finished and defensible project to the committee, they should not revise the submission until after the defense. Remember: the defensible copy is precisely that: defensible as is. After the defense, students will be given a set time to make revisions to their project, as outlined by the project committee.

Those required to attend the oral defense will be the student and all members of the project committee. While other people may be invited to attend the oral defense, only members of the project committee may ask questions and participate in the final vote. While the committee deliberates on the final vote, the student and all others will be excused; once the decision is reached, the student is invited back before the committee to hear their decision.

At the conclusion of the project defense, when all but the committee are excused, the committee will discuss and vote on the student's project and their performance during the oral defense. One of four outcomes will be determined by the vote:

1. **Pass.** The candidate's project has met or exceeded the University and the Project Committee expectations, with no revisions required.
2. **Pass with Qualifications.** Revisions to the project are required before the project committee will give its final approval (Pass). The project committee will determine the time allowed for the revisions to be completed and approved by the committee. The final decision for the approval of the revisions rests with the project chair. When revisions are required, it is the responsibility of the chair to provide the student with a document (e.g. 1–3 pages) from the committee that clearly outlines what revisions need to be made before a Pass can be awarded. This document should be given to the student no more than a day or two after the defense.
3. **Recess.** The project needs significant work and/or the student needs more time to prepare for the oral defense. In the event of a vote to Recess, the oral defense will be postponed for a minimum of 30 days. If students do not pass the second oral defense, they are terminated from the program.
4. **Fail.** If two or more members of the project committee vote to fail the candidate, the student will be terminated from the program without receiving their degree. In the event of a Fail, the committee will need to provide the graduate coordinator with a document that clearly outlines the reason(s) for the Fail.

### **Suggestions to keep in mind for the oral defense of project:**

1. Should begin with an opening prayer.
2. The project chair effectively runs the defense; they open the meeting and facilitate and adjudicate the discussion between the student and the committee.
3. To begin the defense the student should typically be given between 10 to 15 min. to summarize their project. After this, the committee will then typically takes turns asking the student questions about their project.
4. In normal circumstances the actual defense (student summary and questions from committee) should not take more than one hour.

### **APPLYING FOR GRADUATION**

During the semester or term of your defense, you must apply for graduation and complete the items listed below according the following schedule:

Second Week of Semester (or earlier): Apply for graduation: Go to the **Route Y** menu; click on **School**; click on **Apply for Graduation**; The GRADAPP page will appear. Please read this page carefully.

You must have an active ecclesiastical endorsement on file to be eligible to apply for graduation. Click on the link to review your graduate Progress Report and make sure it is correct. Type in your diploma name exactly the way you would like it to appear on your diploma. Click **Submit Application** link.

Pay the graduation fee at the Cashier's Office (D-155 ASB). After paying the fee, return the Graduate Application Form to the Religious Education Graduate Secretary by the deadline (about two weeks into the semester you plan to graduate). The list of deadlines for application are available on-line at <http://www.byu.edu/gradstudies>, select graduation deadlines from the list or you can contact the Religious Education Graduate Secretary. This form must be filed before a project defense can be scheduled.

### **NOTIFYING S&I SUPERVISORS**

If you are a full-time employee in Seminaries and Institute, as soon as all graduation requirements have been met please request a letter from the Graduate Coordinator stating that you have completed your degree. This letter will be sent to the appropriate people in Seminary and Institutes.

### **GRADUATION CEREMONIES**

Graduate students are officially included in graduation ceremonies by virtue of meeting all the deadlines for applying for graduation, completion of course work, project defense, etc. If you have

questions, contact the Graduate Secretary who checks to make sure that all are cleared for graduation who have successfully defended their project and submitted their copies for binding to the library.

Any student who successfully defends AFTER the deadlines but before the end of a semester/term that has graduation ceremonies (Winter Semester or Summer Term), may petition to “walk” through the ceremonies. The student’s name will not be on the program at commencement.

## **DEPARTMENT GRIEVANCE POLICY**

If students have any grievances with their graduate instructors, they must first visit with them in order to seek a resolution. If no resolution can be reached, students may then meet with the Graduate Coordinator who acts as a liaison between the student and the instructor. If the grievance is still unresolved at that point, the Graduate Coordinator will arrange a meeting between the student and the Associate Dean over graduate work. The Associate Dean will review the case and meet with the student the instructor, and the Graduate Coordinator together. If resolution is still not possible, the Associate Dean will arrange a meeting between the Dean of Religious Education, student, and faculty member.

The Dean will review the case and meet with the student and instructor. He will make his decision which will then stand.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFICE POLICY**

D-282 ASB  
Provo, UT 84602-1220  
(801) 422-5895

Brigham Young University does not allow unlawful discrimination based on race, gender, color, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in the academic or employment setting. This includes unlawful sexual harassment, which is a violation of university standards as well as state and federal laws, and may be considered grounds for discipline. Persons who believe they have been unlawfully discriminated against or unlawfully sexually harassed should contact the Equal Opportunity Office.

## **HONOR CODE**

Brigham Young University exists to provide an education in an atmosphere consistent with the ideals and principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That atmosphere is created and preserved through commitment to conduct that reflects those ideals and principles. Members of the faculty, administration, staff, and student body at BYU are selected and retained from among those who voluntarily live the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Observance of such is a specific condition of employment, admission, continued enrollment, and graduation. Those individuals who are not members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are also expected to maintain the same standards of conduct, except they are encouraged to attend the church of their choice. All who represent BYU are to maintain the highest standards of honor, integrity, morality, and consideration of others in personal behavior. By accepting appointment on the faculty, continuing in employment, or continuing class enrollment, individuals evidence their commitment to observe the Honor Code

standards approved by the Board of Trustees “at all times and . . .in all places” (Mosiah 18:9).

## **Honor Code Statement**

*We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men . . . If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.*

–THIRTEENTH ARTICLE OF FAITH

As a matter of personal commitment, students, faculty, and staff of Brigham Young University seek to demonstrate in daily living on and off campus those moral virtues encompassed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and will:

Be honest

Live a chaste and virtuous life

Obey the law and all campus policies

Use clean language

Respect others

Abstain from alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tea, coffee, and substance abuse

Observe the Dress and Grooming Standards

Participate regularly in church services

Encourage others in their commitment to comply with the BYU Honor Code

Specific policies embodied in the Honor Code include (1) the Academic Honesty Policy, (2) the Dress and Grooming Standards, (3) the Residential Living Standards, and (4) the Continuing Student Ecclesiastical Endorsement. (Refer to the current BYU Undergraduate Catalog for more detailed information.)

## **Plagiarism**

Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as the Honor Code. Such plagiarism may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action administered through the university Honor Code Office, in addition to academic sanctions that may be applied by an instructor. Inadvertent plagiarism, although not in violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness that is unacceptable in the academic community. Plagiarism of any kind is completely contrary to the established practices of higher education, where all members of the university are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others that is included in one’s own work. In some cases, plagiarism may also involve violations of copyright law.

Examples of Plagiarism:

**Direct plagiarism** – The verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source.

**Paraphrased Plagiarism** – The paraphrasing, without acknowledgment, of ideas from another that the reader might mistake for your own.

**Plagiarism Mosaic** – The borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending the original material with one’s own without acknowledging the source.

**Insufficient Acknowledgment** – The partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from and original source.

Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished as well as published material. Acts of copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.

## **CONTINUING STUDENT ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT**

For each academic year in which students wish to register for any university credit, including project hours, internships, or off-campus programs, they are required to have obtained a Continuing Student Ecclesiastical Endorsement. LDS students must be endorsed by the bishop of the ward in which they live and which holds their current Church membership records. Non-LDS students may be endorsed by the local leader of their preferred religious denomination, the bishop of the LDS ward in which they live, or the nondenominational BYU chaplain.

## **UNIVERSITY RESOURCES**

The following is a brief description of several campus resources that you may find helpful. For further details regarding BYU facilities, please refer to the BYU home page online. There are drop down menus virtually all of the services and departments at BYU. Here you will also find other information guides include the BYU Class Schedule and the BYU Graduate Studies Catalogue.

### **Harold B. Lee Library**

As the HBLL will probably be your main resource in research, you should familiarize yourself with the special features offered. The Humanities Reference Office, (5224 HBLL, 801/422-4006), which specializes in research assistance, will be especially helpful to you. The Mormon Studies Librarian is Michael Hunter (2249 HBLL 801/422-4090). He can provide significant help on research resources. You may also find it helpful to contact the religion and family history reference desk to get additional help (2250 HBLL, 801/422-6200).

The following is a list of library and other resources available to you:

### **L. Tom Perry Special Collections**

Contains rare books and other special collections such as Whitman, Wordsworth, and Melville, Victorian, Edwardian, Mormon-related materials, and Utah collection. Primary sources for historical research, including diaries, journals, literary manuscripts, research files, photographs, etc. are also located here. (Level 1, 1130 HBLL, 801/422-3514).

### **Interlibrary Loan**

The library provides this service, borrowing copies of materials not found in the HBLL from other

libraries (Level 3, 801/422-6344).

### **Learning Resource Center**

Provides audiovisual materials including, but not limited to, videos, tapes, television programming, etc. for student use (Level 4, 801-422-4582).

### **Lockers and Desks**

Graduate students have first priority in renting lockers and choosing carrels located in the HBLL. There is a small fee per semester. Check with the front desk for sign-up deadlines.

### **Parking Stickers**

A valid parking sticker is required to park on BYU campus. Graduate students may pick up a sticker for G-lots, which allow you to park in additional lots besides the regular student locations. Parking permits are obtained at the Traffic Office located in 2120 JKB (422-3906).

# APPENDIX

## Religious Education Masters Project Prospectus

CANDIDATE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

### APPROVALS:

Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reader \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reader \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Dean \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

THE FOLLOWING PAGES OF YOUR PROSPECTUS SHOULD CONTAIN THE  
ELEMENTS DESCRIBED ABOVE IN THE HANDBOOK