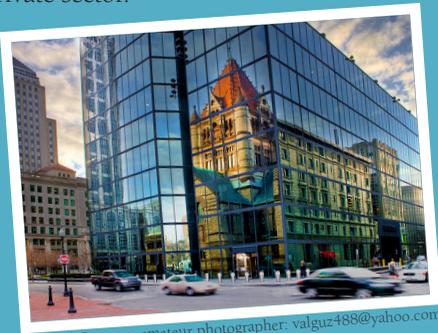


# Regional and Thematic Specializations

Our students receive classical training in the literatures of particular religious traditions, and they are encouraged to understand these traditions at the intersection of contemporary thematic and regional phenomena. Students have the opportunity to concentrate primarily on one of three regional specializations: American religious cultures, Mediterranean religions, and Asian religions. An additional regional specialization typically serves as a secondary area of competence. Students further shape their scholarship through intensive engagement in one of the following thematic specializations: Values, Ethics, and Human Rights; Modernity, Science, and Secularism; Visual Culture, Media and Technology; Language, Rhetoric, and Performance; Body and Praxis; Theory and Method. This curriculum guides students through a rigorous course of study, providing the breadth and depth necessary to produce exciting, rigorous scholarship at forefront of the field of Religious Studies. Graduate Group training prepares students for careers in academia as well as in the government and the private sector.



Val Guzman, amateur photographer: valguz488@yahoo.com



## Admission

Admission to the program is based upon the applicant's potential for scholarship, research, and teaching, along with evidence of a commitment to the advanced study of religion and preparation in at least one language relevant to the intended area of research. Decisions on admission and financial awards are based on all required information, including undergraduate record, graduate record (if applicable), three letters of recommendation, general GRE scores, and a personal statement to be submitted with the online application. Prior to admission, a faculty member must confirm willingness to act as the student's Major Professor (mentor). The online application will be made available in September and all required application materials will be due on December 15 for fall admission. Preliminary consultation with a graduate adviser is encouraged; please contact [religion@ucdavis.edu](mailto:religion@ucdavis.edu).

## Teaching Assistantships

A limited number of teaching assistantships are available to qualified students starting in the first year. Teaching assistantships include a salary and a partial student fee remission. Students who wish to be considered for teaching assistantships in Religious Studies or any other departments or programs should complete the TAship application and return it by December 15th.

## Scholarships and Fellowships

University scholarships and fellowships are available to students with exceptional academic qualifications. Applications for entering students are available online upon completion of the admissions application. Fellowship Applications are due December 15th for awards beginning the following academic year.

## Other Financial Aid

Information concerning grants, loans and work-study assistance is available from the Graduate Financial Aid Office:

<http://financialaid.ucdavis.edu/graduate>

## GRADUATE GROUP IN

# the Study of Religion UC DAVIS



<http://religiongradgroup.ucdavis.edu/>  
(530) 752-5799

## Faculty Expertise and Designated Emphases

Students can work closely with any of the Graduate Group's faculty members. Disciplines represented by faculty are listed below. Students may acquire a Designated Emphasis (graduate minor) in the interdisciplinary fields marked with an asterisk.

- Anthropology
- Art History
- Classics and Classical Receptions \*
- Comparative Literature
- Critical Theory\*
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- English
- Feminist Theory and Research\*
- History
- Jewish Studies
- Middle East / South Asian Studies
- Studies in Performance and Practice\*
- Sociology



# Program Requirements

The Graduate Group in Religion offers a wide-ranging course of study leading to the Ph.D. degree. Students are expected to complete a minimum of sixty units, including at least nine graduate seminars, which are chosen in consultation with the graduate adviser. We encourage students to take courses in a variety of areas in order to develop (1) a comprehensive knowledge of one regional area (American, Mediterranean, or Asian), (2) expertise in one of the Graduate Group's thematic specializations, and (3) competence in a secondary regional specialization. All candidates must also demonstrate proficiency in at least one foreign language in addition to English. It is expected that students will have begun study of their selected foreign language before admission.

By the spring quarter of the first year of study, students will have completed the written component of a preliminary exam. At the end of their second year of study they will take an oral exam that, along with the previous written component, will demonstrate mastery of their specific area of concentration and its relation to the broader field of Religious Studies. This exam will facilitate course selection and advising for the remainder of the coursework for the Ph.D.

At the end of the third year of coursework, the candidate is expected to pass a qualifying examination that includes two components: demonstrating in-depth knowledge of Religious Studies and a successful defense of his/her dissertation prospectus. Doctoral work concludes with the completion and successful defense of the dissertation. A masters degree can be obtained en route to the Ph.D.



# Program Faculty

## David Biale, History.

David specializes in Jewish intellectual and cultural history, history of mysticism and Hasidism, sexuality and the body, and messianism.

## Catherine Chin, Religious Studies.

Catherine studies the literary and educational culture of early Christianity, especially in the third through fifth centuries. She is particularly interested in ideas of text production, transmission, translation, and commentary in early Christian thought.

## Allison Coudert, Religious Studies.

Allison's focus of interest is on the interaction between religion and science in the West, with a special emphasis on Jewish contributions to science and on women and gender issues.

## Mark Elmore, Religious Studies.

Mark's research and teaching examine theories of religion, religion and modernity, South Asian religions, Tantric traditions, the relations between religion and colonialism, and secularism.

## John Hall, Sociology.

John specializes in the sociology of culture and religion. He has conducted research on apocalyptic and other utopian religious movements, focusing especially on religion and violence, including collective suicide and terrorism.

## Mark Halperin, East Asian Languages and Cultures.

Mark studies Medieval Chinese literature, religion, and literati culture. He has devoted particular attention to lay representations and attitudes toward Buddhism, Taoism, and local deities.

## Milmon Harrison, African American & African Studies.

Milmon's work explores the sociology of religion, the Black church in America, American race/ethnic relations, social stratification, and the representation of African Americans in popular culture.

## Naomi Janowitz, Religious Studies.

Naomi studies the religions of late antiquity, contemporary theories about religion and magic, and psychoanalytic ideas as the basis of both therapeutic technique and cultural investigation.

## Suad Joseph, Anthropology & Women and Gender Studies.

She is interested in the interface of gender, family, and state in the Middle East with a focus on Lebanon. She is also interested in the representation of Arab and Muslim Americans in major print news media, and is the editor of *The Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*.

## Flagg Miller, Religious Studies.

Flagg's work focuses on modern Muslim reform and militancy, especially in the Arab world. His courses give special emphasis to the ways religion and ethics are shaped by language use, media, performance and economies of communication generally.

## Lynn Roller, Art History.

Lynn is an archaeologist and art historian who studies the cult practices of ancient Mediterranean societies. Her publications and teaching focus on goddesses and priesthood in ancient Greece and Asia Minor. She has conducted fieldwork in Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria.

## Brenda Deen Schildgen, Comparative Literature.

Brenda's work is focused on the reception of the Bible, early Christian writers, and Dante.

## Jocelyn Sharlet, Comparative Literature.

Jocelyn specializes in classical Arabic and Persian literature.

## John Smolenski, History.

John studies early American history (to 1820), with particular interests in religion, culture, and the history of slavery. He also studies history of the Atlantic World (to 1820).

## Smriti Srinivas, Anthropology.

Smriti is interested in the city and religion, religious movements and utopias, South Asian traditions, and the relationship between the body and religious experience.

## Blake Stimson, Cinema and Technocultural Studies.

Blake studies the history of artistic and philosophical approaches to aesthetic experience that arise from the conflict between spiritual and technical worldviews. In particular he is concerned with contemporary art in the context of capitalist globalization and postsecular theopolitics.

## Daniel Stolzenberg, History.

Daniel specializes in early modern Europe. His interests include the origins of the comparative and historical study of religions, early modern biblical scholarship and Oriental studies, the history of occult sciences, and the relationship of science and religion.

## Baki Tezcan, Religious Studies & History.

Baki works on early modern Ottoman history with a focus on historiography, intellectual history, Islamic law, and politics.

## Archana Venkatesan, Religious Studies & Comparative Literature.

Archana's work focuses on medieval Tamil devotional poetry and their commentaries, as well as the interface between the text, performance, and visual cultures in Hinduism.

## Moulie Vidas, Religious Studies.

Moulie focuses on Talmudic literature and Hekhalot literature as well as on the literary and intellectual culture of late antiquity.

## Keith David Watenpugh, Religious Studies.

Keith is a historian of the modern Middle East whose research interests include the history and theory of humanity, human rights and humanitarianism. He also conducts research on comparative genocide and has written extensively on modern Arab and Islamic thought.

## Diane L. Wolf, Sociology.

Diane's focus is on gender and family dynamics, most recently among post-Holocaust Jewish families. She combines this with an interest in memory, identity and trauma, particularly in regard to the Holocaust in US cultural memory.

## Aram Yengoyan, Anthropology.

Aram is an anthropologist whose interests in religion are explored primarily through his work on Islam in the southern Philippines as well as on religion among Australian Aboriginals.

## Michael G. Ziser, English.

Michael studies early American religious literature up to 1865. He also looks at the relationship between religion and the environment.

