

**NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF
ATHENS**

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS
STUDIES**

**Regulation of Studies, Internship, Mobility, And Master's
Thesis for the Postgraduate Programme
“Religious Studies and Intercultural Research”**

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The regulation for the Postgraduate Program “Religious Studies and Intercultural Research” was approved by the 9th meeting of the Department’s General Assembly on February 24, 2025.

ARTICLE 1. CATEGORIES AND NUMBER OF ADMITTED STUDENTS

1.1 The Master’s Program “*Religious Studies and Intercultural Research*” accepts holders of a first-cycle degree from Greek Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) or from equivalent recognized foreign institutions, as certified by the Hellenic National Academic Recognition and Information Center (DOATAP), in accordance with current legislation.

1.2 The maximum number of admitted students per academic year is **one hundred (100)**, distributed as follows:

- 25 for Specialization A: *History, Theology, and Institutions of Religions*
- 25 for Specialization B: *Religious Culture and Intercultural Education*
- 25 for Specialization C: *Applied Theology and Social Sciences of Religion*
- 25 for Specialization D: *Leadership, Economy, and Church Law*

This number is considered manageable to ensure high-quality postgraduate academic services based on the student–teacher ratio, effective use of teaching facilities and resources, and the employability prospects of graduates.

1.3 In addition to the above, one (1) member per year from the categories EEP, EDIP, and ETEP may be admitted, provided their work at the University is relevant to the subject of the Master’s Program.

1.4 IKY (State Scholarships Foundation) fellows and foreign scholars of the Greek state, for the same or related field of study, are admitted without examinations, provided they meet the Program’s admission criteria (see Article 5).

1.5 The interdisciplinary nature of the Program allows the admission of students from diverse academic backgrounds, provided they demonstrate interest in the study of religious phenomena and intercultural relations.

1.6 If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places, selection is based on the criteria set out in the Program Regulation, ensuring academic excellence and interdisciplinary diversity of the student body.

ARTICLE 2. ADMISSION PROCEDURE

2.1 Student selection follows current legislation, the Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies Regulation of NKUA, and the provisions of this decision.

2.2 Each **June** and, if necessary, again in **September**, following a Department Assembly decision, a call for applications is published on the websites of the Department, the School of Theology, and NKUA.

Applications with all required documents must be submitted to the Secretariat of the Department of Social Theology and Religious Studies within the deadline set by the call, which may be extended by departmental decision.

2.3 The Department Assembly appoints a **selection committee** consisting of at least three faculty members (DEP) teaching in the Program.

2.4 Required documents:

- Application form
- Curriculum vitae
- Copy (both sides) of ID card
- Degree certificate or proof of graduation
- Transcript of undergraduate courses
- English language certificate (B2 level or higher)
- Two letters of recommendation
- Research proposal for the postgraduate thesis
- Academic publications or conference presentations (if any)

- Evidence of professional or research activity (if any)
- Greek language proficiency certificate for foreign applicants
- DOATAP recognition of foreign degrees (where applicable)

2.5 For applicants from foreign institutions who have not yet obtained DOATAP recognition, the procedure follows current legal provisions.

2.6 Evaluation and selection are based on the following weighted criteria:

- Undergraduate degree grade: **25%**
- Performance in relevant undergraduate courses: **15%**
- Research proposal and scientific competence: **20%**
- Certified knowledge of foreign languages: **10%**
- Publications, presentations, and research activity: **10%**
- Letters of recommendation: **5%**
- Oral interview before the three-member selection committee: **15%**

2.7 Based on the total score, the committee compiles a ranking list and submits it for approval to the Department Assembly.

Successful applicants must register with the Program Secretariat within **thirty (30) days** of the Assembly's decision.

2.8 In the case of a tie (rounded to the nearest whole number on a 100-point scale), all tied candidates are admitted, provided they do not exceed **10%** of the total number of admitted students.

2.9 If one or more successful applicants do not register, candidates from the **waiting list** are admitted in order of ranking.

ARTICLE 3. DURATION OF STUDIES

3.1 The duration of studies in the Master's Program (MSc) for obtaining the Postgraduate Diploma is **three (3) academic semesters**. This includes **two (2) semesters of coursework** and **one (1) semester for the Master's thesis**.

3.2 Each semester consists of **thirteen (13) weeks of teaching** and **three (3) weeks of examinations**.

The Master's thesis may be submitted during the third semester, provided that the student has successfully completed all courses from the first two semesters.

3.3 A total of **ninety (90) ECTS credits** are required for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma. Specifically, **thirty (30) ECTS** correspond to each coursework semester and **thirty (30) ECTS** to the Master's thesis.

3.4 Part-time study is possible upon a well-justified request by the student and approval by the Department Assembly.

Eligible applicants for part-time study are:

- a) Students who are **employed for at least twenty (20) hours per week**.
- b) Students with **disabilities or special educational needs**.
- c) Students who are **athletes** and, during their studies, are members of sports clubs registered in the **electronic register of sports clubs** (Article 142, Law 4714/2020, Government Gazette A' 148), maintained by the **General Secretariat of Sports**, under the following conditions:

- (ca) Those who have achieved **1st to 8th place** in national individual championships with at least **12 athletes** and **8 clubs** participating, or compete in teams of the **two highest divisions** in team sports, or participate as members of national teams in **European or World Championships** or other **international events** under the **Hellenic Olympic Committee**; or
- (cb) Those who have participated, even once during their studies, in the **Olympic, Paralympic, or Deaflympic Games**.

Students of this category may register as part-time students upon approval by the **School Dean's Office**.

The duration of part-time study shall not exceed **twice the regular duration** of study. The same maximum study duration applies in this case.

3.5 An extension of studies may be granted upon a well-justified student request and approval by the Department Assembly.

The extension cannot exceed the number of semesters of regular study in the Program. Thus, the **maximum permissible duration of studies is six (6) academic semesters.**

3.6 Students who have not exceeded the maximum study duration may suspend their studies for up to **two (2) consecutive semesters**, following a well-justified request to the Department Assembly.

A suspension of studies is granted only for **serious reasons** (e.g., military service, illness, maternity, study abroad, etc.).

The request must include documentation from relevant public authorities or organizations proving the reasons for suspension.

During the suspension period, **student status is inactive, and participation in any academic activity is not allowed.**

Suspension semesters **do not count toward** the maximum duration of study.

At least **two weeks before the end of the suspension period**, the student must re-register to continue their studies with full student rights and obligations.

Students may terminate their suspension and return earlier **only if** they have been granted a two-semester suspension, by submitting a written request **no later than two weeks before** the beginning of the second suspension semester.

3.7 The duration of suspension or extension is reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis by the **Program Coordinating Committee (S.E.)**, which then submits a recommendation to the **Department Assembly.**

ARTICLE 4. STUDY PROGRAM

4.1 The Master's Program begins in the **winter semester** of each academic year. Each semester (winter or spring) consists of **thirteen (13) weeks of teaching and three (3) weeks of examinations.**

4.2 To obtain the **Postgraduate Diploma (MSc)**, a total of **ninety (90) ECTS credits** is required.

Each semester corresponds to **thirty (30) ECTS**. All courses are **mandatory** and held **weekly**.

Students must follow the order of courses as listed in the study program.

Lectures last **four hours**, and courses are organized by semester as presented in the following program.

4.3 The **language of instruction** is **Greek**, except in special cases (e.g., visiting foreign professors), where **English** may be used.

The **Master's thesis** may be written in **Greek or English**, upon approval by the **Coordinating Committee**.

4.4 During their studies, postgraduate students are required to attend and successfully complete postgraduate courses, engage in research activities, prepare scientific papers, and complete a Master's thesis.

4.5 The Master's thesis is carried out during the **third semester** and corresponds to **thirty (30) ECTS**.

4.6 Teaching is conducted **in person or online**, in accordance with current legislation.

4.7 The indicative course program for each specialization is structured as follows:

Specialization A: “History, Theology, and Institutions of Religions”

Title	ECTS Hours	
1st Semester		
Research Methodology and Academic Writing	5	39
Biblical Theology and the Intercultural Life of the Mediterranean	5	39
Patristic Theology and Christian Anthropology	5	39

Title	ECTS Hours	
Digital Methods for the Analysis and Critical Edition of Biblical Manuscripts	5	39
The Church of Greece as a Factor of Nation-Building and Cultural Identity	5	39
Ancient Greek Religion and Philosophy	5	39
Total	30	
2nd Semester		
Canon Law, History, and Theology of the Ecumenical Councils	5	39
History, Institutions, and Theology of Islam	5	39
Comparative Law of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Sources and Matrimonial Law)	5	39
History and Theology of Eastern Religions	5	39
Christian Theological Literature and the Arab-Islamic World	5	39
Dogmatic Formation of Religious Traditions	5	39
Total	30	
3rd Semester		
Master's Thesis	30	–
Overall Total	90	–

Specialization B: “Religious Culture and Intercultural Education”

Title	ECTS Hours	
1st Semester		
Research Methodology and Academic Writing	5	39
Communicative Theology	5	39
The Bible and Literary Studies	5	39
Comparative Religious Themes – The Bible and Art	5	39
Eastern Religions in the West	5	39
Cultural Psychology of Religion	5	39

Title	ECTS Hours	
Total	30	
2nd Semester		
Biblical and Early Christian Aesthetic Expression in the Mediterranean Region	5	39
Intercultural Education and Inclusive Pedagogy	5	39
Religious Visual Arts	5	39
Topics in the Philosophy of Religion	5	39
Religious Rhetoric and Cultural Diversity	5	39
Evaluative Reading of Hagiographical and Hymnographic Texts	5	39
Total	30	
3rd Semester		
Master's Thesis	30	—
Overall Total	90	—

Specialization C: “Applied Theology and Social Sciences of Religion”

Title	ECTS Hours	
1st Semester		
Research Methodology and Academic Writing	5	39
Religious Laws and Human Rights	5	39
Religious Education in the Public Sphere in the 21st Century	5	39
Geopolitics of Religion: Theoretical Approaches and Practical Applications	5	39
Dogmatic Tradition and Political Theory	5	39
Religion and Political Philosophy	5	39
Total	30	
2nd Semester		
Theology and Literature	5	39
History of Religious-Themed Art	5	39

Title	ECTS Hours	
Dialogue Between Theology and Psychology	5	39
Religions and Ecology	5	39
Religion, Identity, Politics, and Postmodernity	5	39
Neurotheology and Cognitive Psychology of Religion	5	39
Total	30	
3rd Semester		
Master's Thesis	30	–
Overall Total	90	–

Specialization D: “Leadership, Economy, and Church Law”

Title	ECTS Hours	
1st Semester		
Research Methodology and Academic Writing	5	39
Ecclesiastical Correspondence and Protocol	5	39
Organization and Administration of Ecclesiastical Legal Entities	5	39
The Church and Social Networks of Solidarity	5	39
Ecclesiastical Leadership and Human Resource Management	5	39
Canon Law and Principles of Economic Administration and Management of Church Property	5	39
Total	30	
2nd Semester		
Theological Communication and Mass Media	5	39
Institutions and Structures of the Church of Greece	5	39
Religious Diplomacy and Soft Power: Trends and Strategies	5	39
Organization of Missionary Activity and Dialogue with the Contemporary World	5	39
Religious Tourism and Psychosocial Symbolism	5	39
Ecclesiastical Biography and Models of Leadership Practice	5	39

Title	ECTS Hours	
Total	30	
3rd Semester		
Master's Thesis	30	–
Overall Total	90	–

Course Content / Description:

Research Methodology and Academic Writing —

Theory and practice of scientific research and writing; research ethics; source evaluation; modern methods of collecting literature and data; recording and processing methods; qualitative and quantitative research steps; research design and choice of method to support reliable, well-documented academic writing.

Biblical Theology and the Intercultural Life of the Mediterranean —

Biblical theology and intercultural interactions in the Mediterranean. Core concepts and historical development; religious and cultural exchanges among Athens, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome; social structures, cultural practices, and religion's impact on daily life; current issues such as interfaith dialogue and prospects for peaceful coexistence.

Patristic Theology and Christian Anthropology —

Structured study of Patristic Theology and Christian Anthropology. The notion of “Father” within Church Tradition; key milestones from the 2nd century to today; focus on Greek Fathers and the triads “God–World–Human,” “Mind, Word, Spirit.” Pairs studied via patristic sources (e.g., Church & Society; History & Eschatology). Assesses how Christian anthropology responds to older and modern anthropological narratives.

Digital Methods for the Analysis and Critical Edition of Biblical Manuscripts —

Hands-on training in technological methods for researching biblical manuscripts. Understanding facets of the manuscript tradition; digital imaging and analysis; applying digital methods to scrolls, codices, palimpsests; creating digital critical editions. Topics: (a) intro to digital technologies, (b) Digital Humanities methods, (c) applying them to manuscript types, (d) workflows for digital critical editions.

The Church of Greece as a Factor of Nation-Building and Cultural Identity —

The decisive role of the Church of Greece in forming modern national

consciousness and collective cultural identity. Theological, historical, and institutional parameters; from Ottoman rule to today. Critical junctures (1821 Revolution, state formation, later developments). Cultural imprint in education, arts, and social structures; religion–history–culture interactions.

Ancient Greek Religion and Philosophy —

Historical development of ancient Greek religion and its link to philosophical thought, where discourse about the divine becomes philosophical inquiry. Topics: popular and learned religion; rituals; diffusion into social institutions and political life; intercultural, diachronic character of Greek philosophy; notions of soul, generation and decay in religion and philosophy.

Canon Law, History, and Theology of the Ecumenical Councils —

Definitions of Canon Law and Ecumenical Council; types of councils; sources (Scripture, canons, acts). Historical background of councils; synodality and its parameters. Thematic presentation of canonical decisions and doctrinal contributions (dogmatic “definitions”); eschatological orientation of their administrative and theological work.

History, Institutions, and Theology of Islam —

Origins, spread, communities, and culture of Islam. Religious, political, social, economic, and cultural institutions shaping Islamic civilization; their evolution and effects. Core theological ideas (Five Pillars, Qur’an, Sunna); four Sunni legal schools and their impact on law; Sunni/Shi’i thought and Sufism.

Comparative Law of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam —

Sources of religious legal systems in the three traditions; comparative legal-hermeneutical methods; focus on personality rights, marriage, and family. Aims to map similarities/differences and form sound legal judgment. Applies shared primary-law methodology toward dialogue among communities and nations, and to areas such as migration policy, family and social peace, public role of religious communities, intercultural schooling, and aspects of foreign policy and diplomacy.

History and Theology of Eastern Religions —

Origins, history, and beliefs of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Shinto.

Christian Theological Literature and the Arab-Islamic World —

Arabic Christian literature and theology; Christian–Muslim dialogues and Christian views of Islam. Links Middle Eastern history and geography with Christian communities under Arab-Islamic rule. Studies pre-Islamic Arab history and institutions, longstanding Christian communities (Copts, Syrians, Assyrians, Melkites), and Christian elements incorporated into Islamic tradition.

Dogmatic and Symbolic Monuments of Religious Traditions —

Systematic study of doctrinal and symbolic texts across major traditions; historical circumstances of their composition; literary perspective on Christian confessional texts and on doctrinal repositories in Judaism, Islam, and Eastern religions.

Communicative Theology —

Orthodox dogmatics in conversation with philosophy, psychology, mass media, culture, and cinema. Theology as communion of love; from worldly communication to spiritual community. Topics: theology with philosophy/psychology; media and culture in theological thought; overcoming alienation; practical communication of theology in society.

The Bible and Literary Studies —

Bible–literature relations. Poetic qualities of Scripture (e.g., Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Psalms, Revelation) and the Bible's impact on form and themes in world and modern Greek literature (e.g., Rilke, Camus, Eliot, Yeats, Cavafy, Solomos, Sikelianos, Papatzonis, Seferis, Elytis, Empeirikos).

Comparative Religious Iconography — Bible and Art —

Comparative study of Christian religious art (early Christian/Byzantine and Western). Iconographic elements, their narrative relations, underlying ideas, symbols, and historical context; patristic interpretations aiding inner meaning.

Shows how visual arts narrate and teach; highlights the didactic and ethical dimension of iconography and today's power of visual information.

Eastern Religions in the West —

Appearance and reception of Eastern religions in Western societies from the late 19th century to today. Movements and schools from Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism (Vedanta, Zen, Tibetan Buddhism, yoga forms) and their role in cultural hybridization.

Cultural Psychology of Religion —

How religious/spiritual variables interact with culture. Ways individuals and communities interpret and express faith within specific cultural settings; formation of religious types, symbols, and rituals.

Biblical and Early Christian Aesthetic Expression in the Mediterranean —

Religious-aesthetic approach to spaces and forms of biblical-Christian faith in the Greco-Roman world. Topics include: public/private worship in Judaism and the Greco-Roman world; synagogue and Temple; Greek/Roman temples; house-church; transition to Christian churches; early Christian church architecture.

Intercultural Education and Inclusive Pedagogy —

Theories and practices for equity and social justice in schools. Managing cultural/religious diversity; empathy and critical thinking; pedagogies that foster participation and inclusion. Topics: theories of intercultural/multicultural education; policies for vulnerable groups; school–family–community collaboration; differentiated instruction and assessment.

Religious Visual Arts —

Painting, sculpture, miniature, Byzantine iconography, sacred space decoration, and devotional objects. Arts as faith expression and spiritual communication across traditions (e.g., Byzantine canon; Islamic geometry and calligraphy). Historical development, theological links, and cultural value; ethics and spirituality conveyed through art.

Topics in the Philosophy of Religion —

Questions on God's existence and critiques by atheists and skeptics; schools such as Natural Theology and Fideism; Reformation and Western Christianity; nature of monotheism/polytheism; impact of Kant, Wittgenstein, and Vienna Circle logical positivists.

Religious Rhetoric and Cultural Diversity —

Role of religious rhetoric in shaping identities, politics, and social views across traditions, past and present. Analyzes strategies, narratives, and semiotics used by religious leaders; draws on philosophy, history, sociology, religious studies, and political science.

Evaluative Reading of Hagiographical and Hymnographic Texts —

Holiness in Orthodox hagiography from the early Church to today. Sources include ascetic narratives, critical editions, the Constantinopolitan Synaxarion, Menologia. Considers authenticity and rewriting; studies key Greek hymnographic texts and authors (Romanos the Melodist, Andrew of Crete, John of Damascus, Kosmas).

Religious Laws and Human Rights —

Links religious origins/interpretations with human-rights law and equality. Surveys major instruments: UDHR and UN treaties, ECHR, EU Charter, Inter-American, African, and Arab human-rights instruments; influence of religious principles on concepts and protection mechanisms.

Religious Education in the Public Sphere in the 21st Century —

Religious education in a global, plural public space. Models of RE; religion, politics, and neutrality; managing diversity in schools; RE's role in peace and justice; balancing free expression with respect for difference. Uses texts, cases, and experiential work.

Geopolitics of Religion: Theoretical Approaches and Practical Applications —

How religious factors affect international relations, strategy, and intercultural interactions. Cases from various regions; religion's impact on policy, conflicts,

and human-rights debates; applications to tensions and dialogue; tools from theology and political science.

Dogmatic Tradition and Political Theory —

Historical relations between doctrine and political theory: authority, church–state relations, secularization, and the return of religion to the public sphere. Examples from Byzantium and the Papal State to the French Revolution and contemporary populism in Europe and the Middle East.

Religion and Political Philosophy —

Contribution of the Judeo-Christian tradition (with classical Greek education, Roman law, Enlightenment) to Western civilization. The rule of law and its compatibility with monotheism/Christianity; Orthodoxy and Tradition in relation to modernity.

Theology and Literature —

Dialogue between theology and literature (poetry, prose, drama) with Greek and international authors. Major themes (repentance, sin, forgiveness, Resurrection) and figures (Mary Magdalene, Jesus, Judas, Cain, Adam and Eve, Job) in Dante, Dostoevsky, Claudel, Saramago, Kazantzakis, Papadiamantis, Zoe Karelli, Kiki Dimoula, etc.; how writers approach God, poetry and metaphysics, and reception of the sacred.

History of Religious-Themed Art – Museum Education —

Religious visual art as expression of faith and ethics; art and religion as mutually reinforcing avenues of spiritual search; art as a bridge for transmitting messages, morals, and history. Focus on museum education within cultural pedagogy for theological studies and social expression through art.

Dialogue Between Theology and Psychology —

Principles, methods, and goals of interdisciplinary exchange between theology and psychology; boundaries and models of integration; use of psychology in pastoral care; development of skills for effective guidance within Church life.

Religions and Ecology —

Teachings of major religions on the environment (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism). Cooperation among religions and with other fields to address environmental problems. Perspective of Psychology of Religion, including ecopsychology and environmental psychology; Orthodox theology and spirituality; links between spirituality and environmental conscience.

Religion, Identity, Politics, and Postmodernity —

Religion's role in cultural and national identity; religions as factors of peace and dialogue. Topics: postmodernity; stereotypes fueling extremism; homogenizing globalization and otherness; instrumentalization of religion; fundamentalism and secularism; risks to democracy in Europe and beyond.

Neurotheology and Cognitive Psychology of Religion —

Relations between religion and cognitive/neuro sciences (cognitive psychology, philosophy of mind, neuroscience, neuropsychology, neurotheology). Focus on mental and neural processes when relating to the Transcendent.

Ecclesiastical Correspondence and Protocol —

History, significance, and rules of ecclesiastical correspondence and protocol within church hierarchy. Letters as tools of theological guidance, administration, and diplomacy. Analysis of forms and conventions from early Church to today; workshops on drafting formal ecclesiastical letters.

Organization and Administration of Ecclesiastical Legal Entities —

Structure, organization, and governance of church legal entities per Orthodox canons and civil law/jurisprudence. Charter of the Church of Greece; Holy Synod regulations; state provisions; governance of metropolises, parishes, monasteries, shrines; Church of Greece, Church of Crete, and Mount Athos.

Church and Social Networks of Solidarity —

Religion and Church in shaping social networks, infrastructures, and the social economy. From over-consumption to alternative social organization; social character of Christianity from early Church to today; challenges in assessing social benefit when much church social work is unseen.

Ecclesiastical Leadership and Human Resource Management —

Pastoral leadership grounded in Orthodox theology and the Fathers. Skills for ministry and HR management in parishes and church structures; principles of love, service, humility; administrative ethics; development of competencies for effective pastoral governance.

Canon Law and Principles of Economic Administration and Utilization of Church Property —

Model for financial administration of church organizations and stewardship of assets. Types of church property and their legal treatment; fundamentals of management, innovation, revenue practices, planning, risk management, problem solving, and legal framework. Principles and tools (org charts, etc.) aligned with ecclesial ethos, civil law, and economics, supported by legal sources, case law, and examples.

Theological Communication and Mass Media

The course examines the relationship between theology and modern mass media. It studies how theology can be communicated effectively through television, radio, print, and the internet. Students gain the knowledge and skills to understand and critically assess the role of media in conveying religious thought and experience. Topics include: the historical development of theology–media relations; communication theories and their application to theology; analysis of media forms and their impact on religious communication; ethical issues in using media for theological purposes; and practical application, including content creation and managing a presence on social media. By the end, students can analyze media’s role, apply communication theory in pastoral practice, produce effective theological content, and manage theology’s presence on social platforms.

Ecclesiastical Biography and Models of Leadership

The course uses the literary genre of ecclesiastical biography to highlight: (a) moral traits of Christian leadership—humility, wisdom, discernment, candor, fairness, sincerity, self-sacrifice; and (b) methods and principles of leadership—initiative, experiential guidance, oversight, induction, lived practice, cooperation, empathy, and legitimate transcendence. It traces the

development of the genre from early hagiography to modern synaxaria within the wider ecclesiastical literature, showing its theological and social implications. It connects historical examples to contemporary leadership challenges in church and public life, clarifying leaders' roles as sources of spiritual guidance and social cohesion. It analyzes leadership types such as pastoral, charismatic, and exemplar-based leadership, treating ecclesiastical biography as a tool for both historical research and leadership formation.

Institutions and Structures of the Church of Greece

This course studies the institutional and organizational dimensions of the Church of Greece through a multidisciplinary lens (law, economics, public administration). It examines structure, processes, and governance rules of the Orthodox institution; the historical development of church institutions; their interaction with state and society; and how internal structures shape administration, resource management, and application of canon and civil law. Case studies illustrate the complex relations between the Church and contemporary social, political, and economic contexts. The aim is to build critical and analytical skills so students can assess challenges and propose strategies for current issues in church administration.

Religious Diplomacy and Soft Power: Trends and Strategies

The course focuses on how religious organizations and leaders shape and practice diplomacy and exercise “soft power” in today’s international environment. Using theoretical and empirical approaches, it explores religious initiatives in managing interstate relations, mediating for peace and human rights, and promoting educational and cultural exchanges. It reviews current examples and the challenges that arise when religious or cultural communities engage with state or international bodies. Students use tools from Theology, Political Science, and International Relations to understand soft power in religious settings, strengthening their capacity for critical analysis and strategic thinking about religious diplomacy.

Organization of Missionary Activity and Dialogue with the Contemporary World

The course offers systematic knowledge on organizing missionary action at

global and local levels and builds the conditions and methods for dialogue with today's world. It grounds practice in mission theology, dialogue theory, and study of contemporary societies marked by multiple modernities. The goal is robust formation with initiative and leadership skills. Both mission and dialogue presuppose respect for otherness, listening skills, and self-awareness. Using patristic and modern theological texts, Orthodox and ecumenical experience, historical study, and case analyses, the course provides the theory, methods, and know-how needed for mission and dialogue today within a "theology of the borders."

Religious Tourism and Psychosocial Symbolism

This course centers on religious tourism related to Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul, and John of the Book of Revelation. It aims to understand the psychosocial dimensions of religious travel and pilgrimage. Content covers definitions, key concepts, historical development, and analysis of pilgrims' psychological needs and motives along with social effects. It introduces "psychosocial symbolism," examining how contact with places and objects that function as sacred symbols shapes collective consciousness. It studies methods for interpreting symbols, rituals, and sacred spaces so that lived experience becomes an awakening encounter through representational-symbolic learning. A separate unit addresses management and development of religious tourism, appropriate promotion and marketing strategies, and links with sustainable development and positive environmental impact.

ARTICLE 5. DISTANCE LEARNING

5.1 Synchronous Distance Learning

The educational process of the Master's Program "*Religious Studies and Intercultural Research*" is organized as **blended learning**, combining **30% in-person teaching** and **70% synchronous distance learning**. The teaching method(s) to be used are determined by the Coordinating Committee.

Courses and educational activities suitable for online implementation (such as lectures, seminars, and workshops) are delivered using synchronous distance learning methods. Activities that require physical presence (e.g., fieldwork, participation in religious or cultural events) are excluded.

The **Digital Governance Unit of NKUA** is responsible for supporting the distance learning process and ensuring data protection compliance.

5.2 Asynchronous Distance Learning

The program may also use **asynchronous distance learning methods**, which cannot exceed **25% of the total ECTS credits** of the program.

NKUA maintains an **accessible online platform** (also for students with disabilities) that provides asynchronous distance learning services. The platform includes educational material for each course, such as:

- Lecture notes
- Lecture presentations
- Multimedia material
- Bibliographic resources
- Exercises and assignments
- Case studies
- Discussion and reflection topics

All educational material is provided exclusively for academic use by students and is protected by **Law 2121/1993 on intellectual property**, provided the relevant conditions are met.

Special attention is given to **accessibility** for students with disabilities, offering alternative material formats (e.g., audio versions of texts, video subtitles, etc.).

Asynchronous learning complements and supports synchronous teaching, offering flexibility and opportunities for deeper study.

Student assessment for each course is carried out using the tools available on NKUA's **eClass platform (eclass.uoa.gr)**. Each student must have a **desktop or laptop computer** capable of supporting online education software (e.g., **Webex, Zoom**).

ARTICLE 6. EXAMINATIONS AND EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

6.1 Each academic year consists of **two semesters** (winter and spring), each including **13 weeks of teaching** and **3 weeks of examinations**. Exams for both semesters may be repeated during **September**.

6.2 In case a class cannot take place, it must be rescheduled, and the new date and time are posted on the program's website: <https://religious-studies.soctheol.uoa.gr/>

6.3 Attendance of lectures, seminars, and workshops is **mandatory**. A student is considered to have attended a course (and therefore eligible for examination) only if they have attended **at least 75%** of the course hours. Otherwise, the course must be repeated in the next semester it is offered.

6.4 Student evaluation and performance assessment are based on a combination of:

- Written or oral final exams
- Research papers
- Seminar presentations
- Participation in research projects
- Laboratory exercises
- Midterm assessments

6.5 The evaluation method is set by each instructor. Grades are given on a scale of 1–10, with 5 as the passing grade.

Results must be announced within **four (4) weeks** of the exam.

If an instructor repeatedly exceeds this deadline, the **Program Director** informs the **Department Assembly**.

6.6 In cases of force majeure, alternative assessment methods (e.g., online written or oral exams) may be used, provided that exam integrity is ensured.

6.7 Alternative evaluation methods may be used for **students with disabilities or special educational needs**, following a decision by the **Coordinating Committee (S.E.)** and the recommendation of the Department's Disability Committee, in accordance with the **Student Accessibility Unit** guidelines.

6.8 Students who fail a course may retake it during the **September resit period**.

If they fail again, they must repeat the course the next time it is offered.

6.9 If a student fails the same course **more than three (3) times**, the procedure defined by current legislation applies.

6.10 Grade correction is permitted only in cases of **obvious error or miscalculation**, upon written request by the instructor and approval by the Department Assembly.

6.11 Students who fail a course or exceed the absence limit must repeat it. If they fail **two or more courses** in September, or fail to appear for exams

without a valid reason, they are **removed from the program** by decision of the Department Assembly.

6.12 At the end of each semester, students evaluate each course and instructor according to procedures set by the university's **Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP)**.

6.13 Exam papers are kept securely by the instructor for **two (2) years**. After that period, they are destroyed under the Department Assembly's supervision, unless a legal, disciplinary, or administrative procedure is pending.

6.14 The final degree grade is calculated based on the **ECTS weighting** of each course, using the following formula:

$$\text{Final Grade} = \frac{\sum_{\{k=1\}}^{\{N\}} B_k \times ECTS_k}{\text{Total ECTS}}$$

where:

- **N** = number of courses required for graduation
- **B_k** = grade for course k
- **ECTS_k** = ECTS credits for course k
- **Total ECTS** = total credits required for the degree

6.15 The grading scale for the Master's Diploma is:

- **Excellent (Άριστα):** 8.50 – 10.00
- **Very Good (Λίαν Καλώς):** 6.50 – 8.49
- **Good (Καλώς):** 5.00 – 6.49

6.16 The awarding of Master's Diplomas takes place in a **formal public ceremony**, attended by the **Rector (or representative)**, the **Dean of the School**, the **Department Chair**, the **Program Director**, and all graduates who have met the program's requirements.

ARTICLE 7. MASTER'S THESIS

7.1 The thesis (MSc Dissertation) is assigned after successful completion of all courses. It is written in the 3rd semester and must show the student's ability to address, scientifically, a topic in religious studies and intercultural research.

7.2 The thesis must be individual, original, research-based, and contribute to knowledge. It should demonstrate depth of literature review, critical thinking, and synthesis. Writing must follow the official guidelines on the program website.

7.3 The student submits to the Coordinating Committee: proposed title, proposed supervisor, and an abstract. The Committee appoints the supervisor and forms a three-member examining committee. The thesis may be written in Greek and/or English, in consultation with the supervisor.

7.4 The title may be changed upon a reasoned student request with the supervisor's consent; approval by the Department Assembly is required.

7.5 The thesis is delivered to the three examiners at least **20 days** before the defense date. The defense is public before the three-member committee.

7.6 The supervisor and examiners must be teaching staff involved in the MSc, drawn from:

- a) NKUA or other HEIs/ASEIs staff (DEP/ΕΕΠ/ΕΔΙΠ/ΕΤΕΠ), beyond their normal duties if the MSc has tuition fees;
- b) emeritus or retired DEP;
- c) affiliated professors;
- d) adjunct instructors;
- e) visiting professors/researchers;
- f) researchers or specialist scientists of bodies under Law 4310/2014 art. 13A or other research centers (Greece/abroad).

By decision of the Assembly, supervision may also be assigned to DEP/ΕΕΠ/ΕΤΕΠ/ΕΔΙΠ of the Department who are not teaching in the MSc.

7.7 Approved theses are deposited in NKUA's "PERGAMOS" Digital Repository.

7.8 If the thesis contains original results pending publication, upon joint request of supervisor and student, full text may be embargoed for a set period; only the abstract is posted.

ARTICLE 8. OBLIGATIONS AND RIGHTS OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

8.1 MSc students have the same rights and services as undergraduate students (until any granted extension ends), **except** free textbooks.

8.2 Accessibility to textbooks and teaching is ensured for students with disabilities and/or special educational needs via NKUA's **Accessibility Unit** (<https://access.uoa.gr/>).

8.3 The **Career Office** offers counseling on careers and employability. For this MSc, support focuses on placements in bodies active in interfaith dialogue and intercultural communication (<https://www.career.uoa.gr/ypiresies/>).

8.4 Students are invited to participate in the Department's research, conferences, seminars, and workshops; participation in international conferences and projects is encouraged.

8.5 The Department Assembly may **remove** a student if they:

- exceed absence limits;
- fail course(s) and do not complete the program;
- exceed the maximum study duration;
- violate academic integrity;
- do not pay tuition;
- request withdrawal.

8.6 Upon removal, a certificate is issued listing successfully completed courses.

8.7 Students may join EU mobility schemes or NKUA bilateral exchanges to take courses or complete part of the thesis abroad.

8.8 The program encourages participation in projects that promote interfaith dialogue and intercultural understanding.

8.9 Students must follow NKUA's **Code of Ethics** and uphold academic integrity.

8.10 At each semester's end, students evaluate every course and instructor.

8.11 Students may request a **Diploma Supplement** in Greek and English.

8.12 Tuition fees (all specializations): **€1,000 per semester (total €3,000)**. For extension semesters: **€250 per semester**.

ARTICLE 9. TUITION FEE EXEMPTIONS

9.1 Students who meet economic/social criteria and excellence requirements from their first degree may be exempted, per current law. Exemption applies to **one** MSc only and may not exceed **30%** of annual admits.

9.2 Applications for exemption are submitted **after** selection to the MSc. Financial status is never a selection criterion.

9.3 Not eligible: those receiving a scholarship from another source, and **non-EU** citizens.

9.4 The Department Assembly evaluates applications and issues a reasoned acceptance/rejection decision.

9.5 If legislation sets an age criterion, for fair treatment the birthdate is considered **31 December** of the birth year.

9.6 EEP/EDIP/ETEP members admitted as supernumerary under Article 4.3 are **exempt** from tuition.

9.7 If members of the same family (up to 2nd degree) study simultaneously in the MSc, a **50% reduction** applies to the tuition of the second and each additional member.

9.8 Applicants must submit all documents proving eligibility, per current law.

9.9 Decisions are communicated within a reasonable time. Rejections may be **appealed within 10 days** of notification.

9.10 Exempted students retain all rights and obligations set by the MSc Regulations.

ARTICLE 10. SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Students may receive scholarships and awards.

10.1 Scholarships

- **Excellence scholarships (up to two):** awarded to top students based on 1st-semester performance. They waive the tuition fee of the last coursework semester.

Eligibility

- Applicants must have completed half of the normal study duration.
- They must **not** hold paid employment in the public or private sector and **not** receive another scholarship during the same period.

Criteria

- Course average ≥ 8.00 .
- Successful completion of all courses as scheduled.
- Personal and family income.

- In case of ties (including equal income), selection by lottery. If declined, the scholarship passes to the next ranked candidate.

Procedure

- After the call, students submit to the Department Secretariat:
 1. official transcript,
 2. a declaration (via gov.gr) stating: “I do not hold a paid position in the public or private sector, and I am not receiving a scholarship from any other body for this period,”
 3. recent tax assessment (personal and family).
- The MSc Coordinating Committee (S.E.) reviews applications and recommends to the Department Assembly, which decides.
- **Work-study (reciprocal) scholarships:** up to three (3) may be granted for auxiliary teaching in undergraduate programs, depending on MSc intake and finances, following S.E. recommendation and Assembly decision.
 - May cover part or all tuition; calculated on actual hours worked.
 - Hourly rate set annually by Assembly upon S.E. proposal and announced to students.
 - Costs may be charged to project budgets funded by private, international, own funds (Art. 230, Law 4957/2022) and co-funded ESIF projects.
 - Eligibility, criteria, and procedure follow those for excellence scholarships (10.1a).
 - **Auxiliary teaching** includes assisting faculty, leading tutorials/labs, exam supervision, and grading.

10.2 Awards for Excellence

- The MSc may award non-monetary distinctions to the top **three** students of each cohort after completing the 1st and 2nd semesters, upon S.E. proposal and Assembly decision. Certificates are signed by the MSc Director and Department Chair.

Requirements

1. Average for semesters A & B ≥ 8.00 .
2. Completion and passing of all courses in the regular February (A) and June (B) exams.

Procedure

- After June grades are filed, the S.E. ranks students in descending order by average and proposes awards for the top three.

Average (weighted)

$$Average = \frac{\sum_{\{k=1\}}^{\{N\}} B_k \times ECTS_k}{\sum_{\{k=1\}}^{\{N\}} ECTS_k}$$

ARTICLE 11. INFRASTRUCTURE AND FUNDING

11.1 Facilities

For the MSc's proper operation, the Department of Social Theology and Religious Studies (NKUA) will provide:

- Classrooms of the School of Theology, equipped with audiovisual systems,
- The School's Library (extensive holdings in religious studies and intercultural research),
- Department laboratories,
- Department IT infrastructure and equipment.

11.2 The Department Secretariat provides administrative support for the MSc.

11.3 Funding sources may include:

- a) tuition fees;
- b) donations, sponsorships, and financial support of any kind;
- c) bequests;

- d) resources from research projects/programs;
- e) the university's own funds;
- f) the state budget or the Public Investment Program;
- g) any other lawful source.

11.4 Tuition may be paid by the student or by a third party on the student's behalf, if allowed by the MSc founding decision.

11.5 Funds are managed by NKUA's **Research Account (ELKE)**.

11.6 Allocation of funds:

- **30%** of total revenues from tuition is retained by ELKE (including ELKE's management fee).
- For revenues from donations/sponsorships/bequests/projects, the standard ELKE retention for those sources applies.
- The **remainder** covers the MSc's operating costs.

11.7 Resource allocation will prioritize program sustainability and effective support of teaching and student research.

ARTICLE 12. TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS / INSTRUCTORS

12.1 Teaching in the MSc is assigned by Department Assembly decision to:

- a) Members of Teaching & Research Staff (DEP), Special Teaching Staff (EEP), Laboratory Teaching Staff (EDIP) and Special Technical Laboratory Staff (ETEP) of the Department or other NKUA departments, other HEIs, or Military HEIs (ASEI), with additional paid duties if the MSc has tuition.
- b) Emeritus or retired DEP members of NKUA or other HEIs.
- c) Affiliated professors.
- d) Adjunct instructors.
- e) Visiting professors or visiting researchers.
- f) Researchers and specialist scientists of bodies under Law 4310/2014, art. 13A, or other research centers/institutes in Greece or abroad.

g) Recognized experts with specialized knowledge and relevant experience in the MSc field.

12.2 All categories may be paid **only** from MSc funds, no payment from the state budget or Public Investment Program. The Assembly sets each instructor's remuneration. DEP members may receive additional pay for MSc work if they meet minimum legal duties (Law 4957/2022, art. 155(2)); this applies analogously to EEP, EDIP, ETEP.

12.3 The Assembly may assign auxiliary teaching to the Department's PhD candidates, under supervision of an MSc instructor.

12.4 Teaching assignments are made by Assembly decision following a proposal from the MSc Coordinating Committee and must state:

- a) instructor's full name;
- b) status (DEP, EEP, EDIP, ETEP, etc.);
- c) type of teaching (course, seminar, lab);
- d) teaching hours per course/seminar/lab.

12.5 Allocation is decided before the academic year starts for both semesters; if not possible, before each semester begins.

12.6 Instructors on study leave or suspended duties may teach in the MSc if their schedule allows and it is practically feasible, as judged case by case.

ARTICLE 13. AWARD OF THE MASTER'S DEGREE

13.1 A student completes the MSc by meeting the required number of courses and ECTS and by successfully completing the thesis. The Department Assembly confirms completion for the degree award.

13.2 After completion, a certificate of completion is issued; student status ends and participation in university governing bodies ceases.

13.3 The MSc diploma records the final grade to two decimals. Scale: Excellent (8.50–10.00), Very Good (6.50–8.49), Good (5.00–6.49).

13.4 The diploma format is common across NKUA and set by the university's Postgraduate & Doctoral Studies Regulations.

13.5 The MSc awarded is “Religious Studies and Intercultural Research.”

13.6 Each diploma is accompanied by a detailed **Diploma Supplement** in Greek and English (content, learning outcomes, knowledge/skills, and ECTS-based grading).

13.7 Degrees are conferred at a formal ceremony held at least twice per academic year.

ARTICLE 14. GRADUATION OATH

14.1 The oath is not part of program completion but is required to issue the diploma document. It takes place within a Department Assembly session at the School of Theology, in the presence of the MSc Director, the Department Chair or Vice-Chair, and, where possible, a Rector's representative.

14.2 Requests to hold the ceremony in the Central Building's Great Hall are considered by the Rector, based on capacity and the number of graduates, as reported by the MSc Secretariat.

14.3 Graduates who have fulfilled all academic obligations may, in exceptional cases (study/residence/work abroad, serious health reasons), request exemption from the oath. Approval by the Department Chair and the Vice-Rector for Academic, International Relations and Outreach is required.

14.4 Before the ceremony, graduates may receive a certificate of successful completion if all academic and financial obligations are met.

ARTICLE 15. EVALUATION

15.1 External evaluation by the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE)

The MSc is evaluated within the periodic evaluation/certification of the Department. The review covers: overall performance, goal attainment, viability, graduate employability, research contribution, internal student evaluations, the case for continuation, and other quality indicators aligned with national higher-education strategy.

If the MSc is judged not to meet continuation criteria, it operates only until currently enrolled students graduate, per the founding decision and regulations.

15.2 Internal evaluation

Conducted annually by NKUA's **Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP)** with participation of students, teaching staff, administrative/technical staff, and the MSc Coordinating Committee, in line with legislation, the university's Quality System, and HAHE standards.

Assessed in detail:

- a) Program content versus current developments in religious studies and intercultural research.
- b) Course workload and student progress/completion.
- c) Student satisfaction with curriculum, support services, and learning environment.
- d) Course-level feedback each semester via questionnaires.

Use of results (by the Coordinating Committee) aims to:

- ensure program sustainability;
- maintain high academic standards;
- strengthen interdisciplinary approaches to religious phenomena;
- improve educational services;
- better connect teaching with research.

ARTICLE 16. FINAL PROVISIONS

For any matters not covered by current legislation, the NKUA Regulations on Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies, or this decision, the competent bodies of the MSc are responsible for making decisions.