**Comp Template for the Theology Field**

THEOLOGY

The Comps Examinations in Theology are devised by students in consultation with faculty members according to the guidelines listed below and the current UTS catalog. The comps are intended to show actual areas of strength, demonstrating knowledge adequate for the teaching of particular subjects. These will vary somewhat with each individual.

The exams ought to display a critical knowledge of Christian theology in something of its historical, geographical, ecclesiastical, and cultural diversity.

In at least one exam, a significant component of the material studied must come from theologians who have addressed problems arising in the social and cultural situations of Asia, Africa, or Latin America.

One exam must be oral, e.g., a substantial public lecture.

One exam must be closed book. No more than eight hours of writing time should be given to this exam. Extra time should be spent cleaning up the copy. There are four Area exams, as follows:

1. Three distinctive theologians

These are to be selected from different periods of history.

Specification may be made of the focus of attention and the texts to be covered in the case of each theologian. With regard to at least one of the theologians, special attention shall be given to method.

1. On the history of the major Christian doctrines

The student will be responsible for the most important treatments of the doctrine in Christian history, including the place of the bible in its formulation and development.

1. On contemporary theology

The student will be responsible for a general knowledge of present- day theology, understood to include the work of black and Feminist theologians. Certain topics and schools of thought may be selected for special emphasis, but undue repetition of topics dealt with in previous examinations should be avoided.

1. On an area of theology that is related to the thesis

This should be negotiated in a way that leads into the thesis without substituting for the process of designing a thesis proposal, which is a distinct step in the process. This exam may deal with background and resources for the thesis project.

ETHICS

The comps are designed to demonstrate the kind of scholarship and cast of mind that are needed for sound academic work in ethics and/ or theology. In addition, these examinations should demonstrate that the student possesses the requisite analytical, critical, and research skills to serve a variety of communities of accountability. “Comprehensive” thus refers to the range of work appropriate to ethics, theology, and/ or religious thought, not an exhaustive treatment of each examination’s subject area.

Two overriding expectations should inform the student’s work.

First, all ethical and/ or theological inquiry should be historically situated within a pluralistic interpretation of the Area(s) in question plus varieties of sociopolitical and cultural traditions. Second, it is expected that all candidates will consult the literature of voices that are underrepresented in previous generations of research in these areas. Under-represented, or culturally and economically marginalized voices refer to gendered, LGBTQ racial and ethnic voices within European and North American contexts and social and cultural perspectives of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific Islands, including non-dominant voices within these cultural perspectives. Every doctoral student’s program must have a teaching component, an interreligious component, and a methodological component, all with evaluation. Students in the ethics and/ or theology program are strongly urged to take one of the Theory and Method courses at Columbia University.

There are four comprehensive examination areas. Each represents a competency base point for ethics and/ or theology.

1. The Thought of Three Major Thinkers

Selected thinkers should represent several diverse historical and cultural contexts and focus on the interrelationships of moral and theological claims. At least one of the thinkers must be from the 18th century or earlier.

1. Interdisciplinary Studies

It is assumed that ethical and theological theories appropriate and critically integrate non-theological knowledge. The purpose of this exam is to identify and explore streams of thought generated by non- theological perspectives and their significance for Christian ethics and/ or theology. Degree candidates are not expected to master the full range and history of the non-theological discipline investigated. However, streams of theory and knowledge should be understood and interrogated from the standpoint of the institutional and communal relationships within which they emerge.

1. Scripture and the Development of Christian Moral and/ or Theological Traditions

The purpose of this exam is to demonstrate accountability to and for the critical appropriation of the Bible as a source in ethics and/ or theology. Candidates may choose to focus on ethical and/ or theological issues in Hebrew Scripture, the Christian Testament, and other literature pertaining to Christian origins. Or the candidate may focus on the use of the Bible in post-biblical ethics or theology. This option focuses explicitly on the ways that biblical texts or themes have been reread in Christian ethical and/ or theological traditions, including the present, together with a critical assessment of these readings. A third option is to interrogate a moral and/ or theological tradition excluding scriptural material. This option, however, requires special permission of the advisor.

1. Social/Moral/Theological Issue or Problem

This exam addresses critically and normatively a contemporary social, moral, and/ or theological issue or problem. The candidate should make clear what has been problematic in some prior approaches and how contemporary ethics and/ or theology should refocus the issue.