

# HAMPTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL *of* RELIGION

*Darrell K. Williams, Hampton University President*



WHERE SCHOLARSHIP IS MINISTRY

*Pending approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).*

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**INFORMING YOUR  
THEOLOGY**

**ENRICHING YOUR  
MINISTRY**

**BLESSING YOUR  
LIFE**



## **Doctor of Philosophy — Public Theology and Community Engagement (PhD)**

Thank you for your interest in the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree program in Public Theology and Community Engagement at Hampton University. This brochure includes course listings, a typical schedule of courses, and brief descriptions of each course.

Individuals admitted in the program will successfully complete 54 hours above the master's degree. The PhD is an advanced research degree, which emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge in a specialized field using social scientific research skills. Courses in this program are eight weeks in length, with the student typically completing four courses per semester, or two courses per 8-week session. The courses are designed to promote academic rigor, breadth of content, and active student engagement.

This expanded university-based program of religious and theological student is undergirded by the larger academic community of Hampton University as a comprehensive research institution. In addition, communities of faith along with other diverse settings and organizations will serve as hands-on laboratories and teaching sites for supervised internships as a part of dissertation research, field education, and practical experience in public theology and community engagement.

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

## Public Theology and Community Engagement

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree program is designed to produce pastoral scholars and theologians who advance original research delivered as the dissertation. The Ph.D. is designed with a heavy concentration on research and writing in the theological disciplines and related fields. Doctoral students, under the guidance of a research chair are required to immerse themselves in a multi-year continuous cycle of independent study and research in theology and its engagement in the public square.

FIRST YEAR					
FALL COURSES		CREDITS	SPRING COURSES		CREDITS
REL 700	Introduction to Graduate Online Learning	1	REL 713	The Missional Church	3
REL 702	Graduate Research, Writing and Theological Scholarship	2	REL 714	Research in Pastoral Theology	3
REL 711	Ecclesiology & Contemporary Society	3	REL 870	Practical Theology and Research Methods	3
REL 712	Formational Hermeneutics	3	REL 873	Program Design and Evaluation	3
REL 720	Social Psychology	3			
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>

SECOND YEAR					
FALL COURSES		CREDITS	SPRING COURSES		CREDITS
REL 730	The Black College and the Black Church	3	REL 860	Community Engagement and Cultural Identity	3
REL 731	Mediation, Arbitration and Conflict Management	3	REL 861	Cultural Leadership and Social Transformation	3
REL 850	Theology and Public Life	3	REL 862	Community Organizing and Advocacy	3
REL 855	Toward an African American Hermeneutic	3	REL 872	Action Research and Grant Writing	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>

THIRD YEAR					
FALL COURSES		CREDITS	SPRING COURSES		CREDITS
REL 865	Critical Issues in Community Engagement and Advocacy	3	REL 882	Dissertation Research II	1
REL 881	Dissertation Research I	1	REL 883	Dissertation Research III	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2</b>

**REL 900 Special Topics in Public Theology:** Students who need additional time to complete the doctoral dissertation.

**TOTAL PROGRAM HOURS: 54**

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM

## Course Descriptions

### FIRST YEAR COURSES

#### **REL 700 – Introduction to Graduate Online Learning** (1 cr. hr.)

This course familiarizes students with navigating through the online system for a successful start at the graduate level to be prepared for the academic rigor, social learning, and online engagement required to successfully complete the program.

#### **REL 702 – Graduate Research, Writing, and Theological Scholarship** (2 cr. hr.)

This course will introduce and engage Doctor of Philosophy students in the rigorous tasks involved in graduate research, writing, and scholarship. Students will explore various styles of documentation using the APA (American Psychological Association) formatting for all written assignments, projects and papers. The graduate student's research paper will sustain deeper analysis of a topic at great length with a narrow focus and afford opportunities to demonstrate proper source documentation.

#### **REL 711 – Ecclesiology and Contemporary Society** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will focus on selected issues facing Christian leaders in an ever-changing world. Particular attention will be given to understanding the context in which the student lives and serves, and how to develop effective forms of ministry that remain faithful to biblical principles, while being relevant, incarnational in approach, and culturally sensitive in presentation. This course will include a survey of significant events, persons and doctrinal developments over the last one hundred years.

#### **REL 712 – Formational Hermeneutics** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will introduce students to the relationship of writer, text, and reader in the interpretation process (philosophical hermeneutics) and to methods for studying the Bible (exegesis). Students will gain skills for interpreting various literary genres of Scripture and analyze biblical books using sound exegetical methods. This course will re-introduce basic principles of exegesis and use myriad tools for Bible interpretation such as concordances, lexicons,

Bible dictionaries, and commentaries to promote sound biblical theological interpretation.

#### **REL 713 – The Missional Church** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will unfold a biblical perspective of the church that inspires deeply rooted theology for creative leadership. We will trace the missional church throughout Scripture, and bring alive the original missional contexts in Biblical law, the prophets, wisdom literature, the gospels, and the Pauline epistles. We will also examine the ways in which the church can be missional in creative ways beyond the physical building. We will imagine a fresh missional ecclesiology and ask how the missional core of the Biblical narrative informs the church's cultural engagement—personally, locally, and globally—and what practices can form and sustain the deep engagement of a missional community.

#### **REL 714 – Research in Pastoral Theology** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course provides an in-depth study of the biblical and historical roots, theological foundations, and current understanding of pastoral theology. It explores a theology of ministry, and study of specific ministries; introduction to theological reflection; and formation for ministry. This course presents students to the ministry of “care of souls.” Aspects of congregational care and ministry through ritual are explored. Students will begin to develop specific caregiving skills. This course will also teach students how to research pastoral theology by looking at its biblical and theological roots.

#### **REL 720 – Social Psychology** (3 cr. hrs.)

The goal of social psychology is to understand how people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the actual, imagined, and implied presence of others. At the heart of social psychology is the recognition that people are dramatically influenced by social situations. The course will take a social scientific look at the influence of people on the thoughts, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors of other people. It examines how individuals affect and are affected by others. Topics include impression formation, conformity and social influence, self-perception, attitudes, aggression,

prejudice, helping, attraction, group processes, and other components of social interaction.

### **REL 721 – Organizational Psychology** (3 cr. hrs.)

Organizational psychology is the application of psychological principles, theory, and research to the work setting. This course teaches students how to apply this in a congregational setting. It covers a general survey of organizational psychology, including such topics as personnel selection and evaluation, job satisfaction, environmental factors, and current research on individual behavior in complex organizations. This course reveals the usability of organizational psychology to ministry and educates students on how to apply organizational psychology in their churches.

### **REL 870 – Practical Theology Research Methods** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will view practical theology as a research discipline, and delve into the relationship between theology and qualitative research and its role in shaping research design and projects. Students will explore theological methodologies of the social sciences and pursue questions about how they can enable the task of research for theological reflection. Students will discover how practical theologians use theological empirical work and incorporate spiritual practices as an integrative aspect of their qualitative research and theological praxis.

### **REL 873 – Program Design and Evaluation** (3 cr. hrs.)

Students will develop skills, apply key concepts, critically examine a broad range of program development tools, and design a program plan with an evaluation framework, appropriate communication and marketing tools. This course provides a framework for understanding the continuous and integrated process of program evaluation and program design, and begins with an exploration of the various types and purposes of program evaluation.

## **SECOND YEAR COURSES**

### **REL 730 – The Black College and the Black Church** (3 hrs.)

Unique to Hampton University, this course examines the historical and spiritual relationship between historically Black colleges and the Black church. The Black church served as an incubator for the seminal development of historically Black colleges and universities. The church and college continue to be crucial elements in the survival and flourishing of Black communities. This course traces their historic roots and examines the relationship across time and generations. Students will explore myriad ways Black colleges provide opportunities for continuing professional

development, and higher theological education to train ministers serving the unique conditions and challenging needs of Black communities.

### **REL 731 – Mediation, Arbitration and Conflict Management** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course equips students with specific skills necessary for managing and preventing disputes in the church. It presents to students the process of mediation, its history and development, and theories of conflict resolution and negotiation. This course will show students how to examine the nature of disputes and the multiple arenas in which conflict may occur. Students will engage in an overview of the similarities and differences among mediation, arbitration, and conflict resolution and explore professional opportunities in dispute resolution.

### **REL 733 – Economic Development** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course is designed to explore multiple economic development strategies for church congregations. Students will examine the essential tools and concepts of economics to prepare them to understand what makes economic underdevelopment persist, and what helps economic development succeed. Students will receive a comprehensive overview to a field of practice, and identify churches as economic partners with the larger community. This course will enable students to improve their analytical ability in understanding fundraising, obtaining grants, and building networks.

### **REL 734 – Church Curriculum Design** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course analyzes curriculum design theory and shows students how to assess learning needs, frame objectives, recognize relevant subject matter, structure appropriate learning events, implement assessments, and determine program effectiveness. Also included are curriculum evaluation, implementing curriculum change, the role of the teacher, relating curriculum theory to traditional forms of church life, and equipping educational leaders to deal with complex curricular issues in discipleship and faith formation in the church in transition. Students will explore the use of technology, online platforms, social media, hybrid church design, and other issues related to curriculum design to meet the needs of the traditional, post-modern, and emerging church models.

### **REL 735 – Church Pedagogy** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course explores theories of Christian religious education and teaching paradigms used in the church. Students will engage in a comparative study of multiple Christian education curriculum theories and examine the

underlying factors that determine what the role of Christian education is or should be for the church. This course will expand students' concepts of teaching and learning, and the importance of context in local congregations.

#### **REL 754 – Engaging a Multi-Faith World** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will present a deeper perspective of interfaith work as an expression of and an exercise in service, compassion, pastoral care, and spiritual leadership to individuals of diverse faith-traditions, the religiously uncommitted, as well as those averse to any form of organized religion. With recent relevant polls and statistics on the state of religion in America and a variety of case studies, students will discuss the necessity of interfaith cooperation as a major element of community engagement and advocacy.

#### **REL 850 – Theology and Public Life** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course introduces and explores the concepts of leadership, citizenship and theology in the Public Square. Students will discern theological principles relevant to issues in public life. The benefits and challenges of a pluralistic society and God's plan for the world necessitate the integration of theological thought, reflection and practices applied to public discourse and action in relation to the development and flourishing of communities. How does theology influence and affect a community's cultural, social, economic, political and spiritual well-being, and contribute to the formation and thriving of families, churches, congregations and communities? Discussions will center around and pivot on the concept of *the common good*.

#### **REL 851 – African American Faith Traditions** (3 cr. hrs.)

The course is a historical and thematic look at African religions brought to America by enslaved people, and continues with an in-depth examination of the cultural and theological connection between African and African American religions, slave religion, the development of praise houses, the birth of denominations, and the rise of independent African American churches through 1865. This analytical and historical study of African and African American religions, with an emphasis on the history and development of Christianity, will examine the role of theology and religion in building and sustaining African American communities.

#### **REL 852 – Intersectionality, African American Faith, and Life** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course focuses on the faith traditions of African Americans, which have shaped the predominant identity, and community of African American culture and life.

This course explores the intersection of theology, race, culture, and identity and how the cultural identity of African Americans has been forged by the conditions Africans underwent in the Americas before, during and after slavery, reconstruction, Jim Crow, the Civil Rights Movement and into the Twenty-first century.

#### **REL 853 – Theologies and Narratives of Liberation** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will explore the vital nature and societal importance of African American biblical hermeneutics (interpretation) as the intense study of the Christian bible, informed by African American history, experiences and culture. Students will experience African biblical hermeneutics as a methodological resource that shows social and cultural contexts through an African American contextual and cultural hermeneutical lens. An African American hermeneutic seeks to correct the effect of traditional and prevalent biblical interpretation, while exploring what it means to re-interpret the text from an African or African American worldview.

#### **REL 855 – Toward an African American Hermeneutic** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will explore the vital nature and societal importance of African American biblical hermeneutics (interpretation) as the intense study of the Christian bible, informed by African American history, experiences and culture. Students will experience African biblical hermeneutics as a methodological resource that makes the social cultural contexts through African American contextual and cultural hermeneutical lens. An African American hermeneutic seeks to correct the effect of traditional and prevalent biblical interpretation, while exploring what it means to re-interpret the text from an African or African American worldview.

#### **REL 856 – Theological Method and Black Griotic Methodology** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course addresses traditional theological methods and approaches to interpretation of the Bible through five interconnected theological disciplines: exegesis, biblical theology, historical theology, systematic theology, and practical theology. Black Griotic methodology is an additional theological method applied as pedagogy, framework, and a contextually appropriate approach to preserving the history and traditions of African American life and culture. Griotic methodology connects the past and present to weave an authentic historic, religious, and social account of culture and community through the African tradition of dialogue and storytelling.

### **REL 860 – Community Engagement and Cultural Identity** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will cover the process of constituent collaboration with groups and sub-groups connected by geography, interests, circumstances, and proximity. The aim of community engagement and cultural identity is to address those aspects and issues within, among, and surrounding people who have or may have the potential for negatively affecting or disrupting a sense of safety and well-being. Students will come to understand community engagement and cultural identity can take many forms, involves strong partnerships and includes all segments of civic, social, and religious life.

### **REL 861 – Cultural Leadership and Social Transformation** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course presents cultural leadership as the art, science and agenda of leading communities through a process of change with societal transformation as its aim. The course will address myriad ways cultural leadership may be practiced. Students will discover that managers, directors, public officials, entrepreneurs, philanthropists, and others can be social leaders and participate in processes and activities of social transformation. *Prerequisite: REL 860*

### **REL 862 – Community Organizing and Advocacy** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course revolves around introducing organizing and advocacy as a system or collection of activities designed to solve problems for what is referred to as the greater good. The focus of this course will pivot on the theories, principles, and practices of providing services and rallying to support communities and neighborhoods to advance social action. Community organizers and advocates serve as community liaisons to public agencies and other not-for-profit or philanthropic organizations. Students will explore the differences and similarities between community advocates and community organizers, as well as the primary functions of each. *Prerequisites: REL 860 and REL 861*

### **REL 863 – Digital Communications and Strategic Leadership** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will address digital communications as a tool of strategic leadership. The digital leader strategically builds teams, engages and connects people to the mission, drives a culture of innovation, determines risk tolerance, and embraces and sees the principles and practices of continuous improvement as key to strategy. Students will see community engagement, social transformation, and residential life as directly benefiting from the impact of

digital communication to increase human engagement and flourishing. *Prerequisites: REL 860, REL 861, REL 862*

## **THIRD YEAR COURSES**

### **REL 865 – Critical Issues in Community Engagement and Advocacy** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course is designed to facilitate student understanding of social and ethical issues and their impact on a community's capacity to thrive and flourish. A community service placement is required prior to enrolling in the class. The students will write weekly reports about their fieldwork and experiences, connecting those experiences with their personal value system and life experiences. Students will read and write reflectively as they engage in deep discussion and dialogue about community service, engagement and advocacy. *Prerequisites: REL 860-REL 864*

### **REL 872 – Action Research and Grant Writing** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course will present action research as “an approach in which a researcher collaborates to analyze an issue or problem, and works with interested or invested constituents to develop a solution based upon what is discovered in the analysis. Students will be introduced to key components of the grant proposal, characteristics of fundable proposals, analyzing requests for proposals, letters of intent and inquiry, program descriptions and implementation plans, designing measurable goals and objectives, and grant proposal package elements such as the executive summary, abstract, evaluation methods with outcomes, program budget and budget narrative.

### **REL 881 – Dissertation Research I** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course is the first course in a three-part series dedicated to the design and performance of research leading to a PhD. The student will work in consultation with the dissertation chair and committee members to conduct research targeting the aims identified in the student's research proposal, with modifications pre-approved by the Chair and/or committee. The focus of this course is to complete Chapters 1 and 2 (Introduction and Literature Review). *Prerequisite: Passage of the Qualifying Examination and admission into candidacy for the Ph.D.*

### **REL 882 – Dissertation Research II** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course is the second course in a three-part series dedicated to the design and performance of research leading to a PhD. The student will work in consultation with the dissertation chair and committee members to conduct

research targeting the aims identified in his/her research proposal or as modified subsequently with the approval of the Chair and/or committee. The focus of this course is to complete chapters 3 and 4 (Methodology and Results).

**REL 883 – Dissertation Research III** (3 cr. hrs.)

This course is designed to demonstrate that the candidate can successfully present the dissertation and give evidence of superior academic competence and a significant contribution of original knowledge to the field. The focus of this course is to complete the final chapter of the dissertation (Discussion) and defend the dissertation.

This course may be repeated until successful defense of the dissertation in REL 900 Special Topics in Public Theology. *Prerequisites: Instructor Approval and admission to candidacy, REL 881 and REL 882.*

**REL 900 – Special Topics in Public Theology** (3 cr. hrs.)

This seminar-based special topics course is intended to provide a platform for faculty to teach a class that might address timely issues. Special topics in public theology will allow students and faculty to co-design a course with student's specific interest in mind.

## Admission Requirements

- Application and \$50.00 Processing Fee
- Master's Degree from an Accredited Institution
- Minimum Graduate 3.0 GPA
- (3) Letter of Recommendation
- Official College Transcripts
- A 3-page Formatted Writing Sample



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