DEGREE STUDENTS

STANDARDS OF SELECTION

Yale Divinity School welcomes applications from graduates of accredited national and international colleges or universities. Applicants are selected on the basis of academic ability and potential; leadership qualities; spiritual maturity; emotional stability; interpersonal communication skills; seriousness of purpose; personal initiative; and creativity. All completed applications are read, discussed, and evaluated by an Admissions Committee made up of faculty members, graduating students, and administrators. The Admissions Committee makes its determination based on each applicant's completed application, any supplemental materials submitted by the applicant, and (if applicable) prior conversations or interviews with a member of the admissions staff or a representative. Admissions decisions are made without regard to, or knowledge of, the applicant's financial circumstances.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION

A liberal arts degree with work in the humanities and social sciences provides the best preparation for theological study. Some previous work in the field of religion is appropriate, but not mandatory; broad experience in other fields is beneficial. Candidates who have degrees in areas other than liberal arts must demonstrate their readiness to evaluate literary texts, to marshal cogent evidence for a line of reasoning and argumentation, and to write clear research papers and expository essays.

It is recommended that undergraduates who expect to begin theological study include among their college courses some basic work in each of the following fields: English composition and literature, one or more foreign languages (German, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew), history, philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences (economics, sociology, government, social psychology, education).

Applicants who anticipate specializing in biblical studies are urged to obtain a working knowledge of Greek and Hebrew during their undergraduate years. Students who anticipate working toward another degree with language requirements are advised to begin their preparation in those languages while in college.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The YDS admissions application is an online process and can be accessed through the School's website at http://divinity.yale.edu. The application and all accompanying documents including letters of recommendation and transcripts must be submitted electronically. However, admitted students are also required to submit hard copies of official transcripts prior to matriculation.

YDS is a graduate and professional school that works in partnership with Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School, Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music.

Andover Newton specializes in the training of ministers within congregationally based polities; Berkeley is an Episcopal seminary affiliated with YDS; and the Institute of Sacred Music (ISM) is an interdisciplinary graduate center dedicated to the study and practice of sacred music, worship, and the arts.

Applicants to the Andover Newton program should submit an application through the YDS Admissions Office, where they specify their intent to enroll through Andover Newton. Students who want to enroll in Berkeley must apply to YDS or ISM, indicating their interest in the Anglican Studies program. Students who want to apply to both YDS and ISM must complete separate applications to both YDS and the Institute. The ISM application and supporting documents should be sent directly to the ISM Admissions Office. ISM students are chosen from a highly competitive pool so that there is a balance within the Institute of those pursuing studies in liturgics, religion and the arts, and ministry (approximately one-third in each area). Consult the ISM Bulletin for detailed information on admission procedures and curricular requirements for the Institute, or visit http://ism.yale.edu. Andover Newton, Berkeley, and ISM students enrolled at YDS all receive YDS degrees. In addition, Andover Newton students receive a nondegree diploma from Andover Newton; Berkeley students may earn the Diploma (paired with the M.Div. degree) or Certificate (paired with the M.A.R. or S.T.M. degree) in Anglican Studies; and Institute students receive a certificate from ISM.

YDS students may also enroll in joint-degree programs with certain other Yale schools or in approved joint-degree programs in the schools of social work at the University of Connecticut and Yeshiva University. In all cases, admission decisions are made independently by YDS and each of the partner schools or universities. Within Yale, YDS currently has agreements for joint-degree programs with the schools of Forestry & Environmental Studies, Law, Management, Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health. Depending upon the program, students may either be required to apply to the schools simultaneously in the same year or have the option of applying sequentially in different years. Students interested in pursuing joint degrees through the schools of social work at the University of Connecticut or Yeshiva University are encouraged to apply to YDS and either of those schools at the start of the application period in the fall. More information on joint degrees is available in the chapter Other Curricular Considerations.

Persons interested in doctoral studies in religion may apply through the Office of Graduate Admissions of the Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, PO Box 208233, New Haven CT 06520-8233 (graduate.admissions@yale.edu). The Department of Religious Studies serves as the Admissions Committee for doctoral applicants in the following fields of study: American Religious History, Asian Religions, Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, History of Ancient Christianity, Islamic Studies, Judaic Studies, New Testament, Religious Ethics, Theology, Religion and Modernity, and Philosophy of Religion.
Application Instructions

Applicants to YDS must adhere to the following guidelines for submission of materials and processing of applications.

1. Applications submitted by the priority deadline, January 15, will include a nonrefundable fee of $50 (U.S.), payable by credit card. This fee cannot be waived; applications submitted without the fee will not be processed. Applications submitted after the priority deadline require a nonrefundable fee of $75 (U.S.).

2. Applicants must submit a personal statement, two pages double-spaced (maximum), apprising the Admissions Committee of reasons for considering theological education, of formative influences in making this decision, of vocational objectives, and of ways in which the Divinity School's resources can prepare applicants to meet their stated objectives.

3. An academic writing sample is required, five pages double-spaced (maximum), that illustrates the applicant's ability to analyze and argue on a particular subject.

4. Copies of transcripts must be uploaded electronically as part of the application. In addition, for admitted students, official transcripts from each college or university attended must be mailed in sealed and signed envelopes, from the registrar or designated school records official, to the Admissions Office, Yale Divinity School, 409 Prospect Street, New Haven CT 06511-2167.

5. Three letters of recommendation are required. Recommendation letters must be current and address the applicant's potential for the degree program to which application is being made. Letters from Career Service dossiers will not be accepted.

6. IELTS tests (Band scores must be a minimum 7.0 in each area) are required for applicants from countries where English is not the primary language of instruction. Such applicants should register for the IELTS examination at the earliest opportunity, as scoring and processing take considerable time. Results must be received before January 15 for priority applications or February 1 for standard applications. IELTS scores may be submitted electronically. 

Scores from the TOEFL are not accepted.

Note: Applicants who have received a degree from an institution (minimum of two full years of course work) where English is the language of instruction are exempt from this requirement.

7. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required for application to any of the degree programs.

8. A current résumé or curriculum vitae must be submitted.

9. Students applying for financial aid (need-based scholarships and loans) should download the financial aid application at http://divinity.yale.edu. The application deadline is March 1. Applications received after the deadline will be considered on a funds-available basis.

10. The Admissions Committee strongly encourages, but does not require, personal interviews and visits to YDS when classes are in session.

ADMISSION DEADLINES

The priority application deadline is January 15. All online applications submitted on or before the priority filing deadline must include a $50 application fee payable online by credit card at the time of submission. All applications completed (including transcripts, letters of recommendation, essays, and IELTS scores, if applicable) by January 15 will be forwarded to the Admissions Committee for immediate review.

The non-priority application deadline is February 1. Non-priority applications must be accompanied by a $75 application fee. The file must be completed (including transcripts, letters of recommendation, essays, and IELTS scores, if applicable) before it can be considered by the Admissions Committee.

Notification of the Admissions Committee's decisions will be posted to the applicant's online application account on March 15. The Admissions Committee will consider files that are completed after March 1 on a space-available basis.

A candidate who is admitted to YDS will have thirty days from the date of the acceptance letter to reply in writing. A nonrefundable matriculation deposit of $200 must accompany the acceptance of admission form. This fee is applied to the regular first-term bill if the student matriculates; there will be no refund of this deposit if the student does not matriculate. Deferral of admission may, in rare cases, be granted but must be approved by the associate dean of admissions and financial aid. The request should be made in writing, accompanied by the nonrefundable $200 matriculation deposit. If approved, a $500 nonrefundable tuition deposit will also be required.

Unsuccessful applicants must wait two years before reapplying. In such cases, it is expected that the applicant will have pursued additional graduate-level course work for the committee to consider.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

All applicants who are not citizens of the United States and who are not native speakers of English must show evidence of proficiency in the English language either by attaining a satisfactory score (Band scores must be a minimum 7.0 in each area) on the International English Language Testing System examination or by having received a degree from an accredited university or college (minimum of two full years of course work) where English is the primary language of instruction. For information about IELTS test dates and locations, contact IELTS USA, 825 Colorado Boulevard, Suite 221, Los Angeles CA 90041; telephone 323.255.2771; fax 323.704.3444; e-mail ielts@ieltsusa.org; website www.ielts.org.
In addition to the IELTS test, all non-native speakers of English will be required to take an examination in oral and written English in August and may be required to register for a supplemental English class that will be provided and paid for by YDS. This yearlong course will focus on English speaking, writing, and comprehension and will be incorporated into the student's program.

In order to receive a visa to study in the United States, an international student will need to show proof of funds sufficient to cover living expenses, travel expenses, tuition, and health fees for the duration of the student's academic program. While international applicants are eligible for scholarship assistance from YDS, that assistance by itself is seldom, if ever, sufficient to secure an I-20. An international student must be admitted by the Admissions Committee and must have accepted admission before the application process for an I-20 can begin. Once all financial documents are received, the appropriate forms will be filed out and forwarded to Yale's Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS), which will generate the I-20. The Office of Financial Aid will forward the I-20 to the student by Federal Express, usually in May for a student to begin study in the fall term. More information about the process of applying for an I-20 and the necessary forms required may be obtained by exploring the OISS website at http://oiss.yale.edu.

The Office of International Students and Scholars is located at 421 Temple Street, New Haven CT 06511; telephone 203.432.2305; e-mail oiss@yale.edu.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

When it seems advisable for a student to transfer from another school before receiving a degree from that school, the same application process is followed. However, credit for work done at a prior school is not determined until at least one term of residence at Yale Divinity School has been completed successfully. (See the regulations under Transfer of Credit, in the chapter Standards and Requirements.)