

# DEGREE STUDENTS

## STANDARDS OF SELECTION

Each year, Yale Divinity School welcomes applications from students around the world who are graduates of accredited national and international colleges or universities. Applicants are selected based on academic ability and potential to do graduate study work; leadership qualities; spiritual maturity; seriousness of purpose; personal initiative; and creativity. All completed applications are read 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

All applicants must hold a bachelor's-level degree to apply to YDS. 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 PROCEDURES

The YDS admissions application is an online process that can be accessed at <http://divinity.yale.edu>. The application and all accompanying documents including letters of recommendation and transcripts must be submitted electronically. Admitted students are also required to submit hard copies of official transcripts prior to matriculation.

YDS is a graduate and professional school working 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 Divinity School is a seminary of the Episcopal Church and an affiliate of Yale Divinity School, working with students from Anglican and Episcopal backgrounds at YDS who are undertaking discernment and formation for lay and

ordained ministries; 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.

YDS students who participate in the Andover Newton, Berkeley, or ISM programs receive their degrees from Yale Divinity School. In addition to their Yale degree, students affiliated with Andover Newton will receive a nondegree diploma from Andover Newton; Berkeley-affiliated 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 from Berkeley; and Institute students receive a certificate from the ISM.

All applications are submitted through the YDS Admissions Office. Applicants who are interested in participating in the Andover or Berkeley certificate programs must indicate their interest in those specific programs on the YDS application. Applicants who wish to study at both YDS and ISM must complete and submit separate applications to each. Additionally, candidates wishing to pursue joint studies through the ISM and Berkeley or the ISM and Andover Newton must indicate in their YDS application their interest in either Berkeley or Andover Newton. The ISM application can be found online at <https://ism.yale.edu/admission-graduate-study>. 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>.

YDS students may also enroll in joint-degree programs with certain other Yale schools or in the approved joint-degree program in the school of social work at the University of Connecticut. In all cases, admission decisions are made independently by YDS and each of the partner entities. Within Yale, YDS currently has agreements for joint-degree programs with the schools of the Environment, 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 degree study through the school of social work at the University of Connecticut are encouraged to apply to YDS and the University of Connecticut at the start of the application period in the fall. More information on joint degrees is available under Interdisciplinary Study, 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 208323, New Haven CT 06520-8323 ([graduate.admissions@yale.edu](mailto: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, Early Mediterranean and West Asian Religions, Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Islamic Studies, Medieval and Modern Judaism, Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Modernity, Religious Ethics, and Theology.

## Application Instructions and Requirements

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. Applications submitted without payment of the application 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 (*maximum two pages, 12 point double-spaced*), 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 (*maximum five pages, 12 point double-spaced*), that illustrates the applicant's ability to analyze and argue on a particular subject.
4. Unofficial 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 an application is being made. Any additional letters of recommendation beyond the required three will not be accepted, nor will letters from Career Service dossiers.
6. Yale Divinity School requires the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores for all applicants for whom English is not the primary or native language, and who did not complete their baccalaureate degree at an institution where the sole language of instruction is English. IELTS Band scores must be a minimum 7.0 in *each* area. 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.*
7. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required for application to any of the degree programs at YDS.
8. A current résumé or curriculum vitae must be submitted.
9. Students applying for financial aid should complete the forms listed on the YDS "Applying for Financial Aid" webpage (<https://divinity.yale.edu/admissions-aid/tuition-and-financial-aid/applying-financial-aid>). 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. Visits to YDS when classes are in session are recommended.

## 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 may consider files that are completed after March 1 on a space-available basis. A request must be sent to the associate dean of admissions and financial aid for any such consideration.

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 upon approval of the associate dean for admissions and financial aid. The request should be made in writing to the dean of admissions and financial aid, accompanied by the nonrefundable \$200 matriculation deposit which must be paid online. Please note that scholarships cannot be deferred.

Unsuccessful applicants must wait *two full 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

YDS welcomes international student applications from around the world. 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 IELTS examination or by having received a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university or college where English is the sole language of instruction. For information about IELTS test dates and locations, contact IELTS USA, 825 Colorado Boulevard, Suite 106, Los Angeles CA 90041; 323.255.2771; [ielts@ieltsusa.org](mailto:ielts@ieltsusa.org); [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org).

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 insurance for the duration of the student's academic program. While international applicants are eligible for scholarship assistance from YDS, *that assistance by itself is insufficient 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 information is received, the appropriate documentation will be forwarded to Yale's Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS), which will generate the I-20. OISS will send the I-20 to the student electronically, usually within two weeks of receiving all required documentation. 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; 203.432.2305; [oiss@yale.edu](mailto: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.)