The School of Social Science each year invites as Members up to twenty visiting scholars who constitute a genuinely interdisciplinary and international group. A completed doctorate or equivalent is required by the application deadline, and memberships are awarded at both the junior and senior levels. Memberships are awarded for the full academic year; we regret that we cannot consider applications for a single term. Visiting Members are expected to pursue only their own research, while the School organizes a weekly seminar at which Members as well as invited guests present their ongoing work. The School is not wedded to any particular intellectual or disciplinary approach. It welcomes applications in economics, political science, law, psychology, sociology, and anthropology. It encourages social scientific work with an historical and humanistic bent and also considers applications in history, philosophy, literary criticism, literature, and linguistics.

The following thematic focus is neither an exclusive nor excluding theme; it is expected that only one-third of the accepted scholars will pursue work relating to this theme. Applications are strongly encouraged from scholars across the social sciences, whether or not their research corresponds to the theme.

**Theme for 2010-2011: Secularism**

In the light of what, for many, is being defined as a world-wide resurgence of religiosity both as a spiritual and political force, attention has been drawn to the question of the secular. For those who take secularism to be one of the foundational principles of modernity, the appearance of religious-based movements constitutes a critical challenge to the established ways of life associated with liberalism and democracy. Those skeptical of the universalist claims of liberalism argue that sharp oppositions between the secular and the religious, modernity and traditionalism, obscure historical and political processes of state-building, colonial domination, and post-colonial negotiation. Although the question of secularism is a broad one, recent discussions have focused on Islam, on its compatibility with the practice of state religious neutrality; on the assimilability of Muslim minorities in the nominally secular nations of Western Europe; on the relationship between democratic elections and the coming to power of Islamic religious parties in North Africa and the Middle East.

We don’t intend to resolve the disputes between universalists and particularists or to offer a conclusive answer to the many questions posed about Islam. Rather, we want to study with those who take different positions on these questions to see what their various approaches reveal. We approach the theme with the following questions: What has been the history of secularization in different places in the world? What are the forms secularism has taken? How has secularism been defined and by whom? Is religion the opposite of secularism? Are there characteristics that define ours as a “secular age?” Can we say that there are secular subjects whose very constitution differs from those who are non-secular? Is secularism synonymous with liberal values of equality and emancipation? Does secularism promote economic development while religion discourages it? What about gender equality? Can we detect a universal principle of secularism amidst the many particular instances of it?

**Application Deadline: November 1, 2009**

Applications must be submitted through the on-line application system, available at [www.sss.ias.edu/applications](http://www.sss.ias.edu/applications)

**Frederick Burkhardt Fellowships**

In the upcoming academic year, the Institute will again take part in a program sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies: the Frederick Burkhardt Fellowships. These fellowships support more adventurous, more wide-ranging and longer-term patterns of research than are current in the humanities and related social sciences. Applicants must submit to ACLS a research plan typically covering a three to five year period, during which time one year could be spent as a Member at the Institute, either in the School of Historical Studies or the School of Social Science. Qualified candidates who would like to apply for affiliation with either School of the Institute for Advanced Study under the auspices of this program should visit the ACLS website ([www.acls.org](http://www.acls.org)) for a more detailed description of the terms of the fellowship and information about how to apply.