

Claire Kennedy

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Professional Summary

I am a graduate student at Emory University’s Candler School of Theology researching generative artificial intelligence in Catholic contexts. With a strong academic record and experience in both research and teaching, I specialize in the role of artificial intelligence in worship contexts. I have presented my work on AI-driven educational tools and spiritual chatbots at academic conferences and co-authored a book chapter. I am seeking a doctoral program in Religion to further explore the relationship between digital innovations and religious life, aiming to contribute to academic and applied research in this field.

Education

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Master of Theological Studies
3.925 GPA

Atlanta, GA
Expected completion May 2027

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

University Honors in Religious Studies
Double minor in Spanish and Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies
3.98 GPA

Boone, NC
August 2021 - May 2025

Research and Teaching Experience

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Candler Office of Digital Learning Research Assistant

Led student facing AI workshop
Developed faculty hyflex assessment resource
Redesigned Candler Office of Digital Learning website
(<https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/candlerdigitallearning/>)

Atlanta, GA
April 2026
January 2026 – May 2026
October 2025 – December 2025

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Instructional Assistant

Teacher’s assistant for Religion in the Digital Age
North Carolina Religious Studies Association website (ncrsa.org)

Boone, NC
August 2024 – December 2024
January 2022 – May 2022

Undergraduate Research Assistant

Creation of chatbots as study assistants for upcoming class
Artificial Intelligence study-buddy using ChatGPT
Mock interviews conducted using GPT-3

July 2024
January 2023 – December 2023
August 2021 – December 2021

Leadership

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Student Resource for Leadership Candler

Atlanta, GA
March 2026

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Student Conduct Board

Boone, NC
September 2022 – Present

AppolCorps (Orientation) Leader

Summer 2022 – Summer 2024

Honors and Awards

ACADEMICS

Honors College at Appalachian State University
Chancellor's List

Fall 2021 – Fall 2024

STUDY ABROAD

Coursework in Catholic doctrine, philosophy, and religious art

Rome, Italy and Paris, France
June 2022

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

American Academy of Religion

S[ai]nts: Exploring the Use of GPTs for Spiritual Conversation

Boston, MA
November 2025

American Academy of Religion

S[ai]nts: Use of GPTs for Spiritual Conversation in Catholicism

San Diego, CA
November 2024

American Academy of Religion

AI Study-Buddy: Teaching and Learning with AI

San Antonio, TX

Co-Presentation with Randall Reed

November 2023

North Carolina Religious Studies Association

University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Received the Undergraduate Paper Award

October 2022

Speaking With the Dead: A Look at the Digital Afterlife and Discussions with the Deceased

PUBLICATIONS

Randall, Reed, & Kennedy, Claire. "AI Study Buddy: Teaching and Learning with AI." *The Promise and Peril of AI and IA: New Technology Meets Religion, Theology, and Ethics*, edited by Ted Peters, ATF Press, (2024).

Professional Affiliations

MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion
Member since 2023

Research Interests

Religion and Technology
Artificial Intelligence and Spirituality
Catholic Material Studies
Saint Studies, Hagiographies
Women and Queer Studies in Christianity

Skills

LANGUAGES

Spanish
Intermediate proficiency

RESEARCH

Qualitative data analysis

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Python
Github
Prompt Engineering

Media Appearances

SAFE Student Spotlight: Claire Kennedy, Fall 2023 SAFE Fund Recipient

Project: "AI Study Buddy - An Application of ChatGPT"

<https://cas.appstate.edu/news/safe-student-spotlight-claire-kennedy>

Religion in Life: Season 21 Episode 2, "AI Jesus"

Project: S[ai]nts

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzjJkK7g2Z8&list=PLj9GzWdtEAr4acxR2fo_-e4U4tmzmwp&index=9