

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

College of Liberal Arts

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Undergraduate Programs

Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies (120 units)

Students interested in this program should apply to the department chair.

Requirements

The Religious Studies major is organized into four areas of study. Religious Texts examines texts from the world's religious traditions and their historical and cultural contexts. Religious Traditions (Group A) includes coursework in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and Religious Traditions (Group B), coursework in Buddhism, the religions of Japan, the religions of South Asia, the religions of Southeast Asia, and indigenous religions. The fourth area of study is Religion in the Contemporary World.

A minimum of 36 units is required as follows:

Core Courses:

Take 6 units from the following:

R/ST 100, 101, 111, 200, 201

Take the following course:

R/ST 401 Theory and Methods in Study of Religion (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Area Courses:

27 units selected from the following four categories, with at least 3 units in each.*

Religious Texts:

R/ST 210, 311, 312, 318, 319, 320A, 320B, 322, 375, 376, 490**, 499**

Religious Traditions (Group A):

R/ST 230, 314, 315, 317, 331, 337, 383, 460, 467, 471, 472, 490**, 499**

Religious Traditions (Group B):

R/ST 341, 344, 351, 352, 353, 358, 490**, 499**

Religion in the Contemporary World:

R/ST 202, 208, 240, 301, 302, 308, 362, 383, 391, 402, 410, 457, 458, 490**, 499**

*Courses with a subject focus on religion that are offered by other departments can be articulated into the major (up to 6 units).

**When the subject matter of a special topics or directed studies course is applicable, the course may be used.

Minor in Religious Studies

Requirements

The Minor in Religious Studies is available to any non-Religious Studies major. It requires coursework in at least two of the following four areas of study. Religious Texts examines texts from the world's religious traditions and their historical and cultural contexts. Religious Traditions (Group A) includes coursework in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and Religious Traditions (Group B), coursework in Buddhism, the religions of Japan, the religions of South Asia, the religions of Southeast Asia, and indigenous religions. The fourth area of study is Religion in the Contemporary World.

A minimum of 18 units is required as follows:

Lower Division:

A minimum of six units selected from the following:

R/ST 100, 101, 111, 200, 201, 202, 208, 210, 230, 240

Upper Division:

A minimum of 12 upper-division units selected from at least two of the following four areas:

Area Courses:

Religious Texts:

R/ST 210, 311, 312, 318, 319, 320A, 320B, 322, 375, 376, 490*

Religious Traditions (Group A):

R/ST 230, 314, 315, 317, 331, 337, 383, 460, 467, 471, 472, 490*

Religious Traditions (Group B):

R/ST 341, 344, 351, 352, 353, 358, 490*

Religion in the Contemporary World:

R/ST 202, 208, 240, 301, 302, 308, 362, 383, 391, 402, 410, 457, 458, 490*

Courses with a subject focus on religion that are offered by other departments can be articulated into the minor (up to 3 units).

*When the subject matter of a special topics or directed studies course is applicable, the course may be used.

Certificate in Religious Studies

Please be aware that this program is not eligible for Financial Aid unless pursued concurrently with a degree program.

Requirements

A bachelor's degree with a major in a traditional discipline. The Religious Studies Certificate is organized into four areas of study. Religious Texts examines texts from the world's religious traditions and their historical and cultural contexts. Religious Traditions (Group A) includes coursework in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and Religious Traditions (Group B), coursework in Buddhism, the religions of Japan, the religions of South Asia, the religions of Southeast Asia, and indigenous religions. The fourth area of study is Religion in the Contemporary World.

A minimum of 24 units in Religious Studies:

Lower Division:

A minimum of six units selected from the following:
R/ST 100, 101, 111, 200, 201, 202, 208, 210, 230, 240

Upper Division:

A minimum of 18 upper-division units, with at least one course selected from each of the following four course areas:

Religious Texts:

R/ST 210, 311, 312, 318, 319, 320A, 320B, 322, 375, 376, 490*

Religious Traditions (Group A):

R/ST 230, 314, 315, 317, 331, 337, 383, 460, 467, 471, 472, 490*

Religious Traditions (Group B):

R/ST 341, 344, 351, 352, 353, 358, 490*

Religion in the Contemporary World:

R/ST 202, 208, 240, 301, 302, 308, 362, 383, 391, 402, 410, 457, 458, 490*

*When the subject matter of a special topics course is applicable, the course may be used.

Courses with a subject focus on religion that are offered by other departments can be articulated into the certificate (up to 6 units).

Note: Students admitted to the M.A. in Religious Studies who have deficient preparation in Religious Studies must take up to 24 units from undergraduate courses.

Graduate Programs

Master of Arts in Religious Studies

Admission

The primary criteria for admission are the same as those for University graduate admission. In addition, the applicant must have a Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies, or its equivalent, and have achieved a 3.0 GPA in the last 60 semester units attempted. Three letters of recommendation two of which should be from the instructors in the undergraduate major.

Requirements

1. Minimum total units: 30 units of upper division or graduate study, at least 24 of which must be in Religious Studies. The remaining six may be in Religious Studies or another field of study related to Religious Studies and/or the candidate's educational interests. Each student's program must include a minimum of 24 units of graduate courses (which can include six units of Biblical Aramaic or Biblical Hebrew), at least twelve of which must be in the 600 series (not including R/ST 697 and 698). All students must satisfactorily complete R/ST 601.
2. A thesis or comprehensive examination.
3. Proficiency in a modern research language (German or French) demonstrated by passing either the ETS examination with a score of 400 or better or two years of course work with an average grade of "B" or better. Proficiency in an appropriate ancient research language (Sanskrit, Biblical Aramaic, Hebrew, Chinese, etc.)

replaces this requirement for students concentrating in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Religions or in Buddhist Studies. Exceptions to this requirement are rare, but may be made at the discretion of the Graduate Studies Committee.

4. Advancement to Candidacy is a statement of how the student plans to complete all courses and requirements for the degree, including establishing a date and a committee for the thesis or comprehensive examination. It is best done as early as possible. Students taking a comprehensive examination must be advanced to candidacy no later than the semester preceding the examination. Students writing a thesis are advanced to candidacy at the time they begin their thesis work.

Courses (R/ST)

LOWER DIVISION

100. Introduction to Religion (3)

Prerequisite/Corequisite: One GE Foundation course.

Origin, nature, and function of religion in the individual and culture with emphasis upon and reference to outstanding personalities, sacred writings, and basic features of the world's leading religions.

101. Religion at the Movies (3)

Prerequisite/Corequisite: One GE Foundation Course.

Introduces students to the nature of religion and its cultural contexts as reflected in film, examining the religious compensatory functions of film and the processes of religion as represented in selected films from various genres.

111. Religion Games: Religion in the Public Square (3)

Prerequisite/Corequisite: One GE Foundation Course

Introduces how religion functions in the "public square" in different historical eras/cultures through live action role-playing or other games. Issues include the tension between religion as a mode of governing and individual freedom, as resistance, and in conflict with science.

Letter grade only (A-F).

200. Introduction to Early and Western Religions (3)

Prerequisites: Completion of GE Foundation requirements.

A survey of representative figures, themes, the schools in Western religious thought, including Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

201. Introduction to Asian Religions (3)

Prerequisites: Completion of GE Foundation requirements.

Survey of Indian, Chinese and Japanese religious thought. Emphasis will be on original texts in translations.

202. Religion and Society (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Religious and secular views of the relation of persons and society with emphasis upon contemporary problems of personal and social ethics, political responsibility and social structure.

208. Religion and Sexual Ethics (3)

Prerequisite: Completion of GE Foundation requirements.

Exploration of ethical issues related to sexuality within major world religions. Critical analysis of religious norms governing sexuality, particularly as these relate to diverse understandings of the body as a locus of both transcendence and/or social control..

Letter grade only (A-F).

210. Introduction to the Bible (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Overview of Sacred texts of Jews and Christians. Inspiration, Creation, Salvation, and other Biblical themes will be discussed, as well as key persons and events, such as Moses, Jesus, etc.

Not available to students with credit in R/ST 101A.

230. Heaven, Hell and Other Afterlives (3)

Explores the history and development of notions of the afterlife in Judaism. Jewish ideas about the experience of death and the fate of the dead will be studied in the context of broader reflection on ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greek views of the afterlife, as well as brief considerations of Christian and Muslim views of the afterlife.

240. Love, Life, and the World (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Examines love in life and the world. Students will explore the philosophical, religious-mystical, psychological, social, and natural historical dimensions of love and complete both practical and research projects that will lead them to a fuller understanding of a loving life.

UPPER DIVISION

General Education Category A must be completed prior to taking any upper division course except upper division language courses where students meet formal prerequisites and/or competency equivalent for advanced study.

301. Approaching Religion (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Study of methods of religious studies, including the comparative and phenomenological study of religions, textual criticism, exegesis, research methods and techniques.

302. American Religious Diversity (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Examines the diverse religious landscape of American society with a focus on the experiences of some of its major ethnic and racial communities, to include Native American, African American, Latino, and/or Asian American traditions.

308. Comparative Religious Ethics (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Introduction to study of ethics within global perspective while introducing world religions. Major ethical questions and modes of moral reasoning in different religious traditions will be considered while focusing on why ordinary people do good and evil actions.

311. Religion and Literature of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement, completion of one or more Exploration courses, and upper division standing.

The Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, read in translation as a religious, historical and literary document with emphasis on the religion and culture of the ancient Israelites in their ancient Near Eastern context. Selected books from its three divisions – Torah, Prophets, and Writings—are read each term.

312. Intertestament Literature, Palestine History, and Early Christianity (Dead Sea Scrolls) (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Historical development of Jewish religion and culture in the Second Temple period from the rise of the Maccabees to the beginnings of Christianity with emphasis on the rise of the Jewish State, the coming of the Romans and the beginnings of primitive Christianity (Essenism, Phariseism and Sadduceism).

314. Jewish Religion (3)

From the end of the Second Temple period to the close of the Middle Ages. Development from Hellenistic Judaism to Rabbinic Judaism to philosophical theology will be gone into in some detail. Readings from Saadya, Halevi and Maimonides, etc.

315. Modern Jewish Thought/Zionism (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Development of Jewish thought from enlightenment and emancipation from ghettos, through attempts at assimilation, the Holocaust and birth of the Jewish State. Development of conservative, reform and orthodox Judaism.

317. Jewish Mysticism (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Explores some major trends and themes of the Jewish mystical and esoteric tradition. Included are various forms of Kabbalah and Hasidism, meditation and mysticism; explanations of and responses to evil; the nature of God and the relationship between human beings and the divine being; gender dynamics, and the power of ritual.

318. Biblical Hebrew I (3)

Biblical Hebrew I imparts the basic grammatical inflections, conjugations, and structures of elementary biblical Hebrew and starts the student on the path of mastering the specific vocabulary of biblical Hebrew. Introduces history and particularity of this language as well as standard reference tools employed in reading biblical Hebrew.

319. Biblical Hebrew II (3)

Prerequisite: R/ST 318.

Biblical Hebrew II completes instruction in grammar of biblical Hebrew and introduces major syntactical constructions of this language. Increases student's biblical Hebrew vocabulary, hones skills in use of reference books for biblical Hebrew, and allows initial confrontation with selections from Hebrew Old Testament itself.

320A. Biblical Aramaic I (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Alphabets and grammar of Aramaic, the language of Jesus, will be taught. Cultural excursions survey the history of the ancient international language Aramaic and its role in understanding Jesus and the Judaism of his time.

Not open for credit to students with credit in R/ST 220A.

320B. Biblical Aramaic II (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Advanced grammar and readings in Aramaic, the language of Jesus and the international language of the Near East prior to the importation of Greek. Select cultural excursions into the historical impact of Aramaic and special study of unpublished manuscripts.

Not open for credit to students with credit in R/ST 220B.

322. New Testament and Earliest Christian Literature (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

The emergent Christian community, seen through the missionary and pastoral letters, the synoptic gospels, the radical theologies of Paul and John and the dramatic visions of the Apocalypse.

331. Islamic Religion and Culture (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

The Koran, Muhammad and the rise of Islam as a cosmopolitan faith. The development of Muslim civilization, including literature, theology, philosophy and Sufism (mysticism).

337. Sufism (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirement, one or more Explorations courses and upper-division standing.

Covers mainly Sufism and Shi'ism and their intimate relationship. Examines contribution of some great Sūfis and Shi'ite thinkers to development of inner dimensions of Islam i.e. mysticism, esoterism, and spirituality.

Letter grade only (A-F).

341. Buddhism (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

The Buddha; early Buddhism; the great vehicle; and the vehicle of incantations. Transmission of Buddhism to China, Korea, Japan, Southeast Asia and Tibet. Emphasis on original texts in translations.

344. Religions of Japan (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Transmission of continental civilization to Japan; shinto, Buddhism and Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism; Genroku culture; and New Religions. Emphasis on original texts in translations.

351. Hinduism (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Introduction to the religious traditions of Hinduism. Emphasis on the historical and textual study of Hinduism through its various literatures (sacred, narrative, poetic, liturgical, and philosophical). Explores Vedic traditions of sacrifice, the speculative philosophy of the Upanishads, the religious epic and mythological literature, the main gods and goddesses, and the devotional poetry of the medieval poet-saints.

352. Religions of India (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

A survey of Indian religions to the present. Emphasis will be on the ways that religions of historic India have developed and interacted.

353. Religions of Southeast Asia (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement, completion of one or more Exploration courses, and upper division standing.

Introduction to the religions of Southeast Asia. Ancient religion, historical transmission and adaption of Hindu and Buddhist traditions, and recent developments in modern Southeast Asia will be discussed. Emphasis on the religious culture of mainland Southeast Asia.

362. Religion and Psychology (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Examines the religious and psychological interpretation of both individual and community religious activity and experience.

(Lecture 3 hours)

358. Women and Islam in Global Perspective (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements

Introduces a wide range of issues regarding women and Islam, and examines some of the diverse religious, social, political, and economic roles that Muslim women have played from the early days of Islam to the present period.

Letter grade only (A-F).

375. The Historical Jesus (3)

Prerequisite: GE Foundation requirements.

Historical reconstruction of the life and thought of the "Founder" of Christianity in his contemporary cultural and political environment. Standard historical and religious-historical methods are introduced and applied to the preserved sources.

376. Christian Origins (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Consideration of two factions in the early Church in Palestine in the First Century, one following the 'Apostle to the Gentiles' and the other following the family line of Jesus. Readings from primary sources, Paul's Letters, Eusebius, and apocryphal literature.

383. Christianity and Global Ethics (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Examines interaction of Christianity with secular socio-economic ideologies related to globalization and response of Christianity to such ethical issues as poverty, population growth, consumerism, environmental degradation, war, and genocide.

Letter grade only (A-F).

391. Religion and Science (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Examines the occasionally harmonious, often acrimonious, relationship between religion and science. Examines the fundamental insights and claims of both religion and science, moving beyond the frequently sharp prejudices they initially bring to their study to a more reasoned understanding of each alone and in relation to each other.

401. Senior Seminar: Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Examines and compares theories and research methods used in the discipline of Religious Studies, both classical and contemporary. Serves as a capstone course for Religious Studies majors, to include assignments that provide departmental assessment of the major.

Letter grade only (A-F).

402. Religion in America (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Survey of major themes in the unique American religious experience. Topics include the adaptation of European Christianity to novel American circumstances, the proliferation of denominations and the varied religious response to a dynamic American society.

Not open for credit to students with credit in R/ST 482I.

410. Women, Religion and Spirituality (3)

Prerequisites: ENGL 100 or GE Composition (Area A1) and upper division standing, or consent of instructor.

Study of women as spiritual and religious beings responding to and coping with largely patriarchal religious doctrine. Examines socio-religious construction of women and women's religious experience from prehistory to present day. Focus on feminist transformations of religious traditions.

Same course as WGSS 410. Not open for credit to students with credit in WGSS 410.

457. Religion, Film and Literature (3)

Examines religion, film and literature in light of the epochal processes of

secularization and demythologization. Uses the critical methods of the studies

of religion and the narrative arts to explore these important sociocultural processes.

458./558. Women, Religion, and the Developing World (3)

Prerequisites: Upper division or graduate standing.

Causes and implications of globalization, the impact of globalization on women in the developing world, and the multi-faceted role that religion and religious constructions of gender play in this picture.

460./560. Jewish Christianity (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

History and literature of ancient Jewish Christianity in its relationship to Gentile Christianity and Judaism, from the relatives of Jesus through the fourth century.

Letter grade only (A-F).

467. Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Exploration of role of religion in the history, politics, and culture of Latin America. Surveys pre-Columbian religion, the impact of the Encounter, the growth of Protestantism, Liberation Theology, and the coming of age of Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian religions.

Letter grade only (A-F).

471. Early Christianity and Society (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Development of Christianity from the New Testament period to Medieval times with emphases on the growth of doctrine and church institutions in ancient and medieval society.

472. Formation of Modern Christianity (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Explorations courses, and upper-division standing.

Restructuring and renewal of Christianity, from the Reformation through the dawn of modern consciousness to the challenge of 20th century secular life.

490. Selected Topics in Religious Studies (1-3)

Topics of current interest in religious studies selected for intensive development.

May be repeated to a maximum of 9 units with different topics. Topics announced in the *Schedule of Classes*.

499. Directed Studies (1-3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Directed studies to permit individual students to pursue topics of special research interest.

May be repeated to a maximum of 6 units.

GRADUATE LEVEL**550. Islam in the Contemporary World (3)**

Examines key thinkers, movements and issues arising in the global Muslim community in the modern period. It covers early reform movements, the Iranian Revolution, Islamic revivalism, religious violence, Progressive Islam, gender justice, Islam and sexuality, and Muslims in America.

Letter grade only (A-F). Not open for credit to students with credit in R/ST 501.

557. Religion, Film and Literature (3)

Examines religion, film and literature in light of the epochal processes of secularization and demythologization. Uses the critical methods of the studies

of religion and the narrative arts to explore these important sociocultural processes.

Letter grade only (A-F)

558./458. Women, Religion, and the Developing World (3)

Prerequisites: Upper division or graduate standing.

Looks at causes and implications of globalization, impact of globalization on women in the developing world, and the multi-faceted role that religion and religious constructions of gender play in this picture.

560./460. Jewish Christianity (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

History and literature of ancient Jewish Christianity in its relationship to Gentile Christianity and Judaism, from the relatives of Jesus through the fourth century.

Letter grade only (A-F).

590. Selected Topics in Religious Studies (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Topics of current interest in Religious Studies selected for intensive development.

Letter grade only (A-F). May be repeated to a maximum of 9 units with different topics. Topics announced in the *Schedule of Classes*.

595. Advanced Study (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Study under the supervision of a faculty member. Student must fulfill requirements of a selected upper division course plus additional work appropriate to graduate study as determined by the instructor of the course.

Letter grade only (A-F). May be repeated to a maximum of 9 units with different topics in the same semester.

599. Graduate Tutorial (1-3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Supervised and independent study.

Letter grade only (A-F). May be repeated to a maximum of 6 units with different topics in the same semester.

601. Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Examines classical and contemporary theories of religion. Analyzes and compares research methods current in the discipline of Religious Studies.

Letter grade only (A-F).

604. Seminar in Religion in the Contemporary World (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Advanced inquiry into aspects of religion in the contemporary World, including its ethical, cultural, historical or theoretical dimensions.

Letter grade only (A-F). May be repeated to a maximum of 9 units with different topics.

624. Seminar in Ancient Mediterranean Religion (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Advanced inquiry into the religions of the Ancient Mediterranean.

Letter grade only (A-F). May be repeated to a maximum of 9 units with different topics.

646. Seminar in Buddhist Studies (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Advanced inquiry into topics in Buddhist Studies.

Letter grade only (A-F). May be repeated to a maximum of 9 units with different topics.

651. Religion in an Age of Science (3)

Prerequisite: Graduate standing or permission of instructor

This graduate seminar examines modern opinion ranging from skeptical to hopeful on the possibilities for religious belief in our scientific age.

Letter grade only (A-F).

659. Violence, Religion, Gender and Sexuality (3)

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing or consent of instructor

Explores the connections between religion, sexuality, and forms of violence against women in the contemporary world. Examines this issue from within a wide range of global contexts, including the US, and from a variety of world traditions

Letter grade (A-F) only.

665. Magic, Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion (3)

Prerequisite: Graduate standing

Focuses on connections between magic, witchcraft, sexuality and power in the contemporary, global world. How have the labels of magic and witchcraft been used to deny power to marginalized peoples? How are such actually practiced to resist those in power?

Letter grade only (A-F).

690. Selected Topics in Religious Studies (3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Topics of current interest in religious studies selected by the faculty for intensive development.

Letter grade only (A-F). May be repeated to a maximum of 9 units with different topics. Topics announced in the *Schedule of Classes*.

697. Directed Research (1-3)

Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Directed Studies to permit individual students to pursue topics of special research interest.

Letter grade only (A-F). May be repeated to a maximum of 9 units in the same semester.

698. Thesis (1-6)

Prerequisites: Advancement to candidacy, consent of advisor.

Planning, preparation and completion of thesis for the master's degree.

May be repeated to a maximum of 6 units.