Religious Studies

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The Department of Religious Studies offers courses about the teachings and practices of the world's major religions from an academic perspective. Courses focus on the history and philosophy of religions including their origins, sacred texts, rituals and practices, beliefs, and subgroups. The courses provide a broad understanding of the nature and role of religion in the world's many cultures, present and past, for students in all fields, as well as integrated programs for majors in religious studies.

The department annually sponsors two programs, the Ira E. Gaston Lecture in Christianity and the Distinguished Visiting Lecturer in Asian Religion, which bring eminent scholars to campus for lectures and seminars.

Preparation

The best high school or community college preparation for an undergraduate program in religious studies is a good general background in social science and the humanities.

Careers

An undergraduate major in religious studies can lead to graduate programs in religious studies—either academic or professional—as well as other related areas of graduate studies such as history, sociology, folklore, and various area studies (e.g., Middle East studies, East Asian languages and literatures).

Students with a bachelor of arts in religious studies have had success in various professional fields such as religion, journalism, social work, education, business, and law.

Graduate Studies

In the absence of a graduate program, students may work with faculty members from religious studies as well as other university departments toward an Interdisciplinary Studies: Individualized Program (IS:IP) master's degree (MA or MS) focusing on religious studies, offered through the Graduate School. Information is available in the **Graduate School** section of this catalog.

Advanced Degrees in Other Departments

Faculty members in other departments may have a specialty or interest in the study of religion. Students interested in an advanced degree in these areas should apply for admission to graduate study in the relevant department. Prior contact with the faculty member is encouraged. The available degrees, faculty members, and area of specialty are listed below as a guide.

Department	Degree(s)	Specialty	Faculty
Anthropology	PhD (general anthropology MA presupposed)	Comparative religions, religion and symbol in particular cultures	Aletta Biersack, Carol T. Silverman
Asian Studies	MA	Buddhism in premodern Japan	Andrew E. Goble (history)
		East Asian religions	Mark Unno (religious studies)
		Religion and thought in premodern China	Ina Asim (history)
Classics	MA	Classical civilization, ancient philosophy and religions in or related to ancient Greece and Rome	Jeffrey M. Hurwit (art history), Mary K. Jaeger (classics), Steven Shankman (English), Malcolm Wilson (classics)
Folklore	MA		Carol T. Silverman (anthropology), Daniel N. Wojcik (English)
History	MA, PhD	Reformation	David M. Luebke
History of Art and Architecture	MA, PhD	Buddhist art	Charles H. Lachman
		Japanese art	Akiko Walley

Faculty

Judith R. Baskin, Philip H. Knight Professor of Humanities. See **Judaic Studies**.

Frederick Colby, associate professor (Islam). BA, 1991, Haverford College; MA, 1995, Chicago; PhD, 2002, Duke. (2008)

Daniel K. Falk, professor (ancient Judaism and biblical studies). BA, 1987, Providence; MA, 1992, Regent; PhD, 1996, Cambridge. (1998)

Deborah A. Green, Greenberg Associate Professor of Hebrew Language and Literature. See **Judaic Studies**.

David Hollenberg, assistant professor (Arabic). BA, 1990, Wesleyan; MA, 1996, California, Santa Barbara; PhD, 2006, Pennsylvania. (2010)

Stephen J. Shoemaker, professor (history of Christianity). BA, 1991, Emory; MA, 1994, PhD, 1997, Duke. (2000)

Mark T. Unno, associate professor (East Asian religions, Buddhism). BA, Oberlin, 1987; MA, 1991, PhD, 1994, Stanford. (2000)

Emeriti

Hee-Jin Kim, professor emeritus. BA, 1957, MA, 1958, California, Berkeley; PhD, 1966, Claremont. (1973)

J. T. Sanders, professor emeritus. BA, 1956, Texas Wesleyan; MDiv, 1960, Emory; PhD, 1963, Claremont. (1969)

The date in parentheses at the end of each entry is the first year on the University of Oregon faculty.

Participating

Andrew E. Goble, history

Charles H. Lachman, history of art and architecture

Elizabeth Reis, women's and gender studies

Akiko Walley, history of art and architecture

Anita M. Weiss, international studies

Daniel N. Wojcik, English

- **Bachelor of Arts**
- **Bachelor of Science**
- **Minor**

Undergraduate Studies

A bachelor of arts (BA) and a bachelor of science (BS) are degrees offered. A minor is also offered in religious studies and Arabic studies. Courses used to satisfy bachelor degree requirements must be taken for letter grades and passed with a mid-C or better.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

REL 101–102	World Religions	8
Electives in religious studies or additional courses		8
Upper-division religious studies courses		16
Upper-division courses (see Additional Courses list)		12
Total Credits		44

Additional Courses

English		
ENG 421/521	The Bible and Literature	4
Folklore		
FLR 411/511	Folklore and Religion	4
FLR 483/583	Folklore and Mythology of the British Isles	4
History		
HIST 320	High Middle Ages in Europe	4
HIST 321	Late Middle Ages in Europe	4
HIST 322	The Crusades	4
HIST 358	American Jewish History	4
HIST 441/541	16th-Century European Reformations	4
HIST 498/598	Early Japanese Culture and Society: [Topic]	4
History of Art and Architecture		
ARH 387	Chinese Buddhist Art	4
ARH 397	Japanese Buddhist Art	4
International Studies		
INTL 423/523	Development and the Muslim World	4
Judaic Studies		
JDST 212	Medieval and Early Modern Judaism	4
JDST 213	The Jewish Encounter with Modernity	4
Philosophy		
PHIL 320	Philosophy of Religion	4
Sociology		
SOC 461/561	Sociology of Religion	4

Bachelor of Science Degree Requirements

REL 101–102	World Religions	8
Electives in religious studies or additional courses		8
Upper-division religious studies courses		16
Upper-division courses (see Additional Courses list)		12
Total Credits		44

Additional Courses

English		
ENG 421/521	The Bible and Literature	4
Folklore		
FLR 411/511	Folklore and Religion	4
FLR 483/583	Folklore and Mythology of the British Isles	4
History		
HIST 320	High Middle Ages in Europe	4
HIST 321	Late Middle Ages in Europe	4
HIST 322	The Crusades	4
HIST 358	American Jewish History	4
HIST 441/541	16th-Century European Reformations	4
HIST 498/598	Early Japanese Culture and Society: [Topic]	4
History of Art and Architecture		
ARH 387	Chinese Buddhist Art	4
ARH 397	Japanese Buddhist Art	4
International Studies		
INTL 423/523	Development and the Muslim World	4
Judaic Studies		
JDST 212	Medieval and Early Modern Judaism	4
JDST 213	The Jewish Encounter with Modernity	4
Philosophy		
PHIL 320	Philosophy of Religion	4
Sociology		
SOC 461/561	Sociology of Religion	4

Honors in Religious Studies

Requirements for a degree with honors in religious studies typically include the following:

1. Satisfaction of the requirements for a major
2. A cumulative grade point average of 3.80 in courses taken to satisfy the major requirements
3. Formal approval of the department

The candidate for honors shall request approval no later than the second week of fall term in the senior year. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with the undergraduate advisor before applying. Application forms are available in the department office.

A faculty committee supervises the honors thesis project. Candidates typically register for 3 credits of Research: [Topic] (REL 401) for both fall and winter terms of the senior year to prepare for writing the thesis.

Contingent on satisfactory progress, the candidate then enrolls for 4 credits of Thesis (REL 403) spring term. A first draft of the thesis must be submitted six weeks before the end of spring term and the final draft two weeks after that.

Religious Studies Minor Requirements

REL 101	World Religions: Asian Traditions	4
REL 102	World Religions: Near Eastern Traditions	4
Religious studies courses		8
Upper-division religious studies courses		8
Total Credits		24

Arabic Studies Minor Requirements

Category I: Third-Year Arabic		
ARB 301–303	Language and Culture	12
Category II: Advanced Arabic		
ARB 331	Reading Classical Arabic	4
ARB 431	Islamic Political Thought	4
Category III: Arabic Culture and Society		
An elective from the following list:		4
ARB 199	Special Studies: [Topic]	
COLT 370	Comparative Comics	
COLT 461	Studies in Contemporary Theory: [Topic] (Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory)	
COLT 462	Cultural Intersections: [Topic] (Orientalism)	
COLT 470	Studies in Identity: [Topic] (Multiculturalism and Empire)	
GEOG 209	Geography of the Middle East and North Africa	
HIST 199	Special Studies: [Topic] (The Iraq War; Islamic Civilization I or II; Islam in the Modern World)	
HIST 322	The Crusades	
HIST 399	Special Studies: [Topic] (The Iraq War)	
INTL 399	Special Studies: [Topic] (Islam and Global Forces)	
INTL 407	Seminar: [Topic] (Militant Islam; Middle Eastern Politics; Development and Social Change in the Middle East)	
INTL 423	Development and the Muslim World	
J 467	Issues in International Communication: [Topic] (The Arab World and the Media)	
JDST 340	Israelis and Palestinians	
PS 399	Special Studies: [Topic] (Egypt; Politics of the Middle East)	
REL 102	World Religions: Near Eastern Traditions	
REL 233	Introduction to Islam	
REL 324–325	History of Eastern Christianity	
REL 335	Introduction to the Qur'an	
REL 432	Islamic Mysticism: [Topic]	
REL 435	Advanced Study of the Qur'an: [Topic]	
TA 472	Multicultural Theater: [Topic] (Arab American Theater)	
Total Credits		24

Modified Requirements for Students with Prior Literacy in Arabic

Students who already have skills that satisfy the equivalent of the ARB 301–303 third-year sequence—whether from native proficiency, study abroad, or courses from another university—may choose to test out of one or more of these courses by passing a proficiency examination, administered by the UO Testing Center, designed to demonstrate basic literacy in Arabic. If students wish to transfer their third-year Arabic courses from other universities or from overseas study, they may do so contingent on the successful completion of an examination at the appropriate level, to ensure proper placement.

Students who pass the proficiency exam must still complete 24 credits for the minor in Arabic studies, including at least 12 from among Category II courses and up to 12 from among Category III electives.

Courses

ARB 101. First-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Introduction to Arabic with emphasis on speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension. Sequence with ARB 102, 103.

ARB 102. First-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Introduction to Arabic with emphasis on speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension. Sequence with ARB 101, 103.
Prereq: ARB 101.

ARB 103. First-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Introduction to Arabic with emphasis on speaking, reading, writing and comprehension. Sequence: ARB 101, 102
Prereq: ARB 102

ARB 199. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-10 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB 201. Second-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Development of Arabic speaking, reading, writing and comprehension; study of short literary and cultural materials. Sequence: ARB 202, 203.
Prereq: ARB 103 or equivalent.

ARB 202. Second-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Development of Arabic speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension; study of short literary and cultural materials. Sequence with ARB 201, 203.
Prereq: ARB 201 or equivalent.

ARB 203. Second-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Development of Arabic speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension; study of short literary and cultural materials. Sequence with ARB 201, 202.
Prereq: ARB 202 or equivalent.

ARB 253. Introduction to Arabic Culture. 4 Credits.
A survey of the linguistic, geographic, social, cultural, religious, political, and artistic aspects of the contemporary Arab world.

ARB 301. Language and Culture. 4 Credits.
Provides third-year-level Arabic proficiency and substantially adds to the vocabulary base. Activates and augments grammar structures of modern spoken Arabic, colloquial Egyptian Arabic, and the study of Arabic culture. Sequence: ARB 302, 303.
Prereq: ARB 203.

ARB 302. Language and Culture. 4 Credits.
Provides third-year-level Arabic proficiency and substantially adds to the vocabulary base. Activates and augments grammar structures of modern spoken Arabic, colloquial Egyptian Arabic, and the study of Arabic culture. Sequence: ARB 301, 303.
Prereq: ARB 301.

ARB 303. Language and Culture. 4 Credits.
Provides third-year-level Arabic proficiency and substantially adds to the vocabulary base. Activates and augments grammar structures of modern spoken Arabic, colloquial Egyptian Arabic, and the study of Arabic culture. Sequence: ARB 301, 302.
Prereq: ARB 302.

ARB 331. Reading Classical Arabic. 4 Credits.
Improves students' abilities to work with classical Arabic texts; serves as a gateway to other classical Arabic text courses.
Prereq: ARB 202 or equivalent.

ARB 353. Arab Cinema. 4 Credits.
Introduction to Arab cinema and culture through an examination of the development of cinema in Arabic-speaking countries. Offered alternate years.

ARB 399. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB 405. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB 407. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB 409. Practicum: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB 410. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB 431. Islamic Political Thought. 4 Credits.
Students improve skills at translating and analyzing Arabic texts while learning Islamic theories of governance. Close reading of primary sources from the 7th to 21st centuries.
Prereq: ARB 203.

ARB 507. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB 510. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB 531. Islamic Political Thought. 4 Credits.
Students improve skills at translating and analyzing Arabic texts while learning Islamic theories of governance. Close reading of primary sources from the 7th to 21st centuries.

ARB 605. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

Courses

REL 101. World Religions: Asian Traditions. 4 Credits.
Introduction to related religious traditions of Asia, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism and Shinto. Readings in sacred texts and scholarlary literature. Lecture, discussion.

REL 102. World Religions: Near Eastern Traditions. 4 Credits.
Introduction to the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and to related traditions such as the Zoroastrian, Manichaean, Mandean, Baha'i. Lecture, discussion.

REL 199. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 211. Early Judaism. 4 Credits.
Development of the Jewish religion from its earliest existence until the Christian era.

REL 222. Introduction to the Bible I. 4 Credits.
Content and organization of the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament); examination of scholarly methods and research tools used in biblical studies.

REL 223. Introduction to the Bible II. 4 Credits.
Examination of the written traditions of early Christianity with an emphasis on the New Testament.

REL 233. Introduction to Islam. 4 Credits.
Islamic religious tradition, beginnings to present. Pre-Islamic Arabia, Prophet Muhammed, pillars of Islam, ethics and piety, Sunni-Shiite divide, reform and renewal movements.

REL 253. Religion, Love, and Death. 4 Credits.
Examines the interplay of themes of religion, love, and death in Asian and Western literature and media.

REL 302. Chinese Religions. 4 Credits.
Prehistoric roots of Chinese religion, Confucius and his followers, philosophical Taoism, Han Confucianism, religious Taoism, Chinese Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism, religion in China today.

REL 303. Japanese Religions. 4 Credits.
Early Shinto and its developments, Japanese Buddhism, transformation of Taoism and Confucianism, medieval Shinto, religion in the Tokugawa period, Nationalistic Shinto, folk religion, new religions.

REL 304. Religions of India. 4 Credits.
An introduction to the major religious traditions of the Indian subcontinent: Hinduism and Buddhism, and more briefly Sikhism and Jainism.

REL 305. Hinduism: Myth and Tradition. 4 Credits.
A survey of Hinduism, examining its complex system of doctrines, myths, rituals and spiritual practices, and its historical development. Offered alternate years.

REL 317. Jesus and the Gospels. 4 Credits.
Considers early evidence for Jesus, including canonical and noncanonical gospels, in light of critical scholarship and historical reconstructions.

REL 318. Women in Judaism. 4 Credits.
Women and their roles in Judaism; emphasis on early modern and contemporary eras. Texts read include historical, literary, and theoretical documents.

REL 321. History of Christianity. 4 Credits.
Course of Christian history in East and West; relations between spirituality, doctrine, and institutional forms. Covers the ancient period, from the Apostolic Fathers to the Islamic conquests (90–650).

REL 322. History of Christianity. 4 Credits.
Course of Christian history in East and West; relations between spirituality, doctrine, and institutional forms. Covers medieval Western Christianity, from the Germanic invasions to the Reformation (400–1500).

REL 323. History of Christianity. 4 Credits.
Course of Christian history in East and West; relations between spirituality, doctrine, and institutional forms. Covers modern Western Christianity, from the Reformation to the present (1500 to the present).

REL 324. History of Eastern Christianity. 4 Credits.
Byzantine Christianity from the founding of the Christian Roman Empire to the Fall of Constantinople in the 15th century.

REL 325. History of Eastern Christianity. 4 Credits.
The Eastern churches from the 15th century to the present.

REL 335. Introduction to the Qur'an. 4 Credits.
An introduction to the nature of the Qur'an and the various ways it has been interpreted throughout history by both Muslims and non-Muslims.

REL 353. Dark Self, East and West. 4 Credits.
Comparative examination of selfhood in Eastern and Western religious thought and cultural contexts. Focus on dark side or problematic dimensions of Buddhist, Christian, Daoist, Jewish, and other thought.

REL 355. Mysticism. 4 Credits.
The experiential or mystical dimensions of the three major Abrahamic faiths. Exploration of the original writings of men and women from each spiritual tradition.

REL 399. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 401. Research: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 403. Thesis. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 405. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 407. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 408. Colloquium: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 409. Supervised Tutoring. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 410. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 412. Dead Sea Scrolls: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Exploration of the Dead Sea Scrolls literature. Focus on either biblical texts and the development of the Hebrew Bible or nonbiblical texts and sectarian Judaism. Repeatable once when topic changes for a maximum of 8 credits.
Prereq: REL 211.

REL 414. Biblical Book: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Close reading of one or more books of the Judeo-Christian Bible in literary, historical, and cultural contexts; history of interpretation; and critical scholarship. Repeatable twice when topic changes for a maximum of 12 credits.

REL 418. Martyrdom. 4 Credits.
Exploration of themes of sacrifice and martyrdom in ancient and medieval literatures of the Abrahamic traditions. Comparative approach to development of concepts within and across religious boundaries.

REL 420. Jewish and Christian Spiritual Autobiographies. 4 Credits.
Explores autobiographies written by Christians and Jews from late antiquity to the present. Emphasis on history of western spirituality and focus on Jewish and Christian religious commonalities and differences.

REL 424. Early and Medieval Christian Heresy. 4 Credits.
Survey of various heretical beliefs from early medieval Christian history; examines alternative visions of Christian truth, and the formation from heterodoxy of orthodoxy.

REL 426. Sex and Gender in Early Christianity. 4 Credits.
Study of how and why certain early Christians sought, successfully, to normalize certain interrelated cultural constructions of gender, the body, and sexuality.

REL 432. Islamic Mysticism: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Inner dimensions of Islamic piety and righteousness, from the Koranic and prophetic foundations to principal thinkers in the medieval Arabic and Persian Sufi traditions. Repeatable twice for a maximum of 12 credits.

REL 435. Advanced Study of the Qur'an: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Close reading of a section of the Qur'an in terms of its literary, historical, and cultural contexts, history of interpretation, and critical scholarship. Sequence with REL 335. Repeatable once for a maximum of 8 credits when topic changes.

REL 440. Readings in Buddhist Scriptures. 4 Credits.
Readings in representative scriptures in English translation. Selection based on their import in development of Indian Buddhist philosophy and their impact on evolution of East Asian forms of Buddhism.

REL 444. Medieval Japanese Buddhism. 4 Credits.
Medieval Japanese Buddhism of the 12th and 13th centuries. Examination of religious thought and cultural history including Zen and Pure Land.

REL 507. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 508. Colloquium: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 510. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 512. Dead Sea Scrolls: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Exploration of the Dead Sea Scrolls literature. Focus on either biblical texts and the development of the Hebrew Bible or nonbiblical texts and sectarian Judaism. Repeatable once when topic changes for a maximum of 8 credits.

REL 514. Biblical Book: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Close reading of one or more books of the Judeo-Christian Bible in literary, historical, and cultural contexts; history of interpretation; and critical scholarship. Repeatable twice when topic changes for a maximum of 12 credits.

REL 518. Martyrdom. 4 Credits.
Exploration of themes of sacrifice and martyrdom in ancient and medieval literatures of the Abrahamic traditions. Comparative approach to development of concepts within and across religious boundaries.

REL 520. Jewish and Christian Spiritual Autobiographies. 4 Credits.
Explores autobiographies written by Christians and Jews from late antiquity to the present. Emphasis on history of western spirituality and focus on Jewish and Christian religious commonalities and differences.

REL 524. Early and Medieval Christian Heresy. 4 Credits.
Survey of various heretical beliefs from early medieval Christian history; examines alternative visions of Christian Truth, and the formation from heterodoxy of orthodoxy.

REL 526. Sex and Gender in Early Christianity. 4 Credits.
Study of how and why certain early Christians sought, successfully, to normalize certain interrelated cultural constructions of gender, the body, and sexuality.

REL 532. Islamic Mysticism: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Inner dimensions of Islamic piety and righteousness, from the Koranic and prophetic foundations to principal thinkers in the medieval Arabic and Persian Sufi traditions. Repeatable twice for a maximum of 12 credits.

REL 535. Advanced Study of the Qur'an: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Close reading of a section of the Qur'an in terms of its literary, historical, and cultural contexts, history of interpretation, and critical scholarship. Repeatable once for a maximum of 8 credits when topic changes.

REL 540. Readings in Buddhist Scriptures. 4 Credits.
Readings in representative scriptures in English translation. Selection based on their import in development of Indian Buddhist philosophy and their impact on evolution of East Asian forms of Buddhism.

REL 544. Medieval Japanese Buddhism. 4 Credits.
Medieval Japanese Buddhism of the 12th and 13th centuries. Examination of religious thought and cultural history including Zen and Pure Land.

REL 605. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 608. Colloquium: [Topic]. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL 609. Supervised Tutoring. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.