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 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

Faten Arfaoui, instructor (Arabic). BA, 2006, Ibn Charaf; MA, 2010, 2012, Texas Tech. (2014)

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)

Hanan Elsherif, instructor (Arabic). BA, 1993, MA, 2002, PhD, 2009, Minia. (2011)

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

Luke Habberstad, assistant professor. BA, 2003, Yale; MA, 2007, PhD, 2014, California, Berkeley. (2014)

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

David Reis, visiting assistant professor. BA, 1990, Santa Clara; MA, 1993, Creighton; MA, 1998, PhD, 1999, Claremont Graduate. (2007)

Andrew Riley, visiting assistant professor. See **Judaic Studies**.

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, 1987, Oberlin; 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 major and minor requirements must be taken for letter grades and passed with a mid-C or better.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

REL101–102	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		
HIST320	High Middle Ages in Europe	4
HIST321	Late Middle Ages in Europe	4
HIST322	The Crusades	4
HIST358	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		
ARH387	Chinese Buddhist Art	4
ARH397	Japanese Buddhist Art	4
International Studies		
INTL 423/523	Development and the Muslim World	4
Judaic Studies		
JDST212	Medieval and Early Modern Judaism	4
JDST213	The Jewish Encounter with Modernity	4
Philosophy		
PHIL320	Philosophy of Religion	4
Sociology		
SOC 461/561	Sociology of Religion	4

Bachelor of Science Degree Requirements

REL101–102	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		
HIST320	High Middle Ages in Europe	4
HIST321	Late Middle Ages in Europe	4
HIST322	The Crusades	4
HIST358	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		
ARH387	Chinese Buddhist Art	4
ARH397	Japanese Buddhist Art	4
International Studies		
INTL 423/523	Development and the Muslim World	4
Judaic Studies		
JDST212	Medieval and Early Modern Judaism	4
JDST213	The Jewish Encounter with Modernity	4
Philosophy		
PHIL320	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] (REL401) 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 (REL403) 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

REL101	World Religions: Asian Traditions	4
REL102	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		
ARB301–303	Language and Culture	12
Category II: Advanced Arabic		
ARB331	Reading Classical Arabic	4
ARB431	Islamic Political Thought	4
Category III: Arabic Culture and Society		
An elective from the following list:		4
ARB199	Special Studies: [Topic]	
COLT370	Comparative Comics	
COLT461	Studies in Contemporary Theory: [Topic] (Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory)	
COLT462	Cultural Intersections: [Topic] (Orientalism)	
COLT470	Studies in Identity: [Topic] (Multiculturalism and Empire)	
GEOG209	Geography of the Middle East and North Africa	
HIST199	Special Studies: [Topic] (The Iraq War; Islamic Civilization I or II; Islam in the Modern World)	
HIST322	The Crusades	
HIST399	Special Studies: [Topic] (The Iraq War)	
INTL399	Special Studies: [Topic] (Islam and Global Forces)	
INTL407	Seminar: [Topic] (Militant Islam; Middle Eastern Politics; Development and Social Change in the Middle East)	
INTL423	Development and the Muslim World	
J467	Issues in International Communication: [Topic] (The Arab World and the Media)	
JDST340	Israelis and Palestinians	
PS399	Special Studies: [Topic] (Egypt; Politics of the Middle East)	
REL102	World Religions: Near Eastern Traditions	
REL233	Introduction to Islam	
REL324–325	History of Eastern Christianity	
REL335	Introduction to the Qur'an	
REL432	Islamic Mysticism: [Topic]	
REL435	Advanced Study of the Qur'an: [Topic]	
TA472	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

ARB101. First-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Introduction to Arabic with emphasis on speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension. Sequence with ARB 102, 103.

ARB102. First-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Introduction to Arabic with emphasis on speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension. Sequence with ARB 101, 103.
Prereq: ARB 101.

ARB103. First-Year Arabic. 5 Credits.
Introduction to Arabic with emphasis on speaking, reading, writing and comprehension. Sequence: ARB 101, 102
Prereq: ARB 102

ARB199. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-10 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB201. 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.

ARB202. 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.

ARB203. 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.

ARB253. Introduction to Arabic Culture. 4 Credits.
A survey of the linguistic, geographic, social, cultural, religious, political, and artistic aspects of the contemporary Arab world.

ARB301. 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.

ARB302. 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.

ARB303. 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.

ARB331. 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.

ARB353. 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.

ARB399. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB405. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB407. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB409. Practicum: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB410. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB431. 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.

ARB507. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB510. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

ARB531. 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.

ARB605. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

Courses

REL101. 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.

REL102. 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.

REL199. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL211. Early Judaism. 4 Credits.
Development of the Jewish religion from its earliest existence until the Christian era.

REL222. 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.

REL223. Introduction to the Bible II. 4 Credits.
Examination of the written traditions of early Christianity with an emphasis on the New Testament.

REL233. 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.

REL253. Religion, Love, and Death. 4 Credits.
Examines the interplay of themes of religion, love, and death in Asian and Western literature and media.

REL302. 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.

REL303. 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.

REL304. 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.

REL305. 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.

REL317. Jesus and the Gospels. 4 Credits.
Considers early evidence for Jesus, including canonical and noncanonical gospels, in light of critical scholarship and historical reconstructions.

REL318. 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.

REL321. 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).

REL322. 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).

REL323. 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).

REL324. 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.

REL325. History of Eastern Christianity. 4 Credits.
The Eastern churches from the 15th century to the present.

REL335. 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.

REL353. 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.

REL355. 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.

REL357. War, Terrorism, and Religion. 4 Credits.
Offers an examination of the theme of war, terrorism, and religion, focusing on cases of religiously motivated acts of violence in the contemporary era.

REL399. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL401. Research: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL403. Thesis. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL405. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL407. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL408. Colloquium: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL409. Supervised Tutoring. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL410. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL412. 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.

REL414. 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.

REL418. 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.

REL420. 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.

REL424. 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.

REL426. 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.

REL432. 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.

REL435. 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.

REL440. 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.

REL444. 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.

REL507. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL508. Colloquium: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL510. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL512. 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.

REL514. 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.

REL518. 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.

REL520. 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.

REL524. 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.

REL526. 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.

REL532. 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.

REL535. 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.

REL540. 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.

REL544. 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.

REL605. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL608. Colloquium: [Topic]. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

REL609. Supervised Tutoring. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.