Religious Studies (BA/BS)

From antiquity to the present, religion has provided a vocabulary for individuals to confront ultimate questions about the meaning of life. Understanding the role of religion is critical for analyzing socio-political forces shaping the world. A major in religious studies provides training for any humanitarian profession. Recent graduates have gone on to study law, medicine, and journalism; work in social service organizations; and pursue graduate study in a variety of disciplines. The skills students hone as majors—critical reading, analytical thinking, and writing—along with knowledge of global religious traditions, serves them well in whatever career path they choose.

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 religious studies department offers courses that reflect the research expertise of the faculty. Students can enroll in classes ranging from "Early Judaism," to "The Dark Self: East and West," and "War, Terrorism, and Religion." Many religious studies seminars are small, limited to fifteen students, allowing for deep exploration of the material and low student to professor ratios. For a full list of regular course offerings, follow the "courses" link on the right.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Identify, describe, and explain a wide diversity of religious phenomena in their historical, social, political, and cultural contexts.
- Discuss diverse religious phenomena with others in a well-informed, critical, and respectful manner.
- Read and critically evaluate current scholarly literature on method and theory in the academic study of religion.
- Read and critically analyze primary and secondary sources from and about diverse religious traditions, applying appropriate theoretical and methodological tools in the academic study of religion.
- In speech and writing, make an effective and valid argument about religion: one that successfully establishes a premise and supports the premise with appropriate and persuasive evidence.

Courses used to satisfy major requirements must be taken for letter grades and passed with a mid-C or better.

Religious Studies Major Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
REL 101–102	World Religions	8
Electives in religious studies or additional courses		8
Upper-division religious studies courses (Must include REL 411)		16
Upper-division religious studies courses and/or upper-division additional courses		12
Total Credits		**44**

Additional Courses

Code	Title	Credits
Folklore		
FLR 350	Folklore and the Bible	
FLR 411	Folklore and Religion	
History		
HIST 320		
HIST 321		
HIST 441	16th-Century European Reformations	
HIST 498	Early Japanese Culture and Society: [Topic]	
History of Art and Architecture		
ARH 321	Ancient Jewish Art	
ARH 387	Chinese Buddhist Art	
Global Studies		
GLBL 423		
Judaic Studies		
JDST 212	Medieval and Early Modern Judaism	
JDST 213	The Jewish Encounter with Modernity	
Philosophy		
PHIL 320	Philosophy of Religion	

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.

Four-Year Degree Plan

The degree plan shown is only a sample of how students may complete their degrees in four years. There are alternative ways. Students should consult their advisor to determine the best path for them.

Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies

Course	Title	Credits	Milestones
First Year			
Fall			
REL 101	World Religions: Asian Traditions	4	
WR 121Z	Composition I	4	
First term of 1st-year second-language sequence		5	
Elective course		4	
	Credits	**17**	
Winter			
REL 102	World Religions: Near Eastern Traditions	4	
WR 122Z or WR 123	Composition II or College Composition III	4	
Second term of 1st-year second-language sequence		5	
Core-education course that also satisfies a cultural literacy requirement		4	
	Credits	**17**	
Spring			
Third term of 1st-year second-language sequence		5	
Core-education course in arts and letters		4	
Core-education course in science		4	
Lower-division elective for major		4	
	Credits	**17**	
Second Year			
Fall			
First term of 2nd-year second-language sequence		4	
Core-education course in arts and letters		4	
Core-education course in social science		4	
Core-education course that also satisfies a cultural literacy requirement		4	
	Credits	**16**	
Winter			
Second term of 2nd-year second-language sequence		4	
Core-education course in arts and letters		4	
Core-education course in social science		4	
Core-education course in science		4	
	Credits	**16**	
Spring			
Third term of 2nd-year second-language sequence		4	
Core-education course in arts and letters		4	
Core-education course in social science		4	
Core-education course in science		4	
	Credits	**16**	
Third Year			
Fall			
Upper-division course with REL subject code		4	
Upper-division elective course		4	
Core-education course in science		4	
Core-education course		4	
	Credits	**16**	
Winter			
Upper-division course with REL subject code		4	
Upper-division elective course		4	
Core-education course in social science		4	
Elective course		4	
	Credits	**16**	
Spring			
Upper-division course with REL subject code		4	
Upper-division elective course		4	
Elective courses		8	
	Credits	**16**	
Fourth Year			
Fall			
Upper-division course with REL subject code		4	
Elective courses		8	
	Credits	**12**	
Winter			
Upper-division course with REL subject code		4	
Elective courses		8	
	Credits	**12**	
Spring			
Elective courses		12	
	Credits	**12**	
	Total Credits	**183**	

Bachelor of Science in Religious Studies

Course	Title	Credits	Milestones
First Year			
Fall			
REL 101	World Religions: Asian Traditions	4	
WR 121Z	Composition I	4	
MATH 105Z or MATH 111Z	Math in Society or Precalculus I: Functions	4	
Elective course		4	
	Credits	**16**	
Winter			
REL 102	World Religions: Near Eastern Traditions	4	
MATH 106 or MATH 112Z	University Mathematics II or Precalculus II: Trigonometry	4	
WR 122Z or WR 123	Composition II or College Composition III	4	
Core-education course that also satisfies a cultural literacy requirement		4	
	Credits	**16**	
Spring			
MATH 107 or MATH 112Z	University Mathematics III or Precalculus II: Trigonometry	4	
Lower-division elective for major		4	
Core-education course in arts and letters		4	

Core-education course in science	4
Credits	**16**

Second Year

Fall

Core-education course in arts and letters	4
Core-education course in social science	4
Core-education course in science	4
Core-education course that also satisfies a cultural literacy requirement	4
Credits	**16**

Winter

Core-education course in arts and letters	4
Core-education course in social science	4
Core-education course in science	4
Elective course	4
Credits	**16**

Spring

Core-education course in arts and letters	4
Core-education course in social science	4
Core-education course in science	4
Elective course	4
Credits	**16**

Third Year

Fall

Lower-division elective course with REL subject code	4
Upper-division elective course	4
Core-education course in social science	4
Elective course	4
Credits	**16**

Winter

Upper-division course with REL subject code	4
Upper-division elective course	4
Elective courses	8
Credits	**16**

Spring

Upper-division course with REL subject code	4
Upper-division elective course	4
Elective courses	8
Credits	**16**

Fourth Year

Fall

Upper-division course with REL subject code (Must take REL 101 by this term)	4
Elective courses (Must begin year of mathematics by this term)	8
Credits	**12**

Winter

Elective courses	12
Credits	**12**

Spring

Elective courses	12
Credits	**12**
Total Credits	**180**