

Religious Studies Major and Minor

www.religiousstudies.pitt.edu/undergraduate

Revised: 11/2016

Religion is one of the creative expressions of the human spirit, and a primary motivator of human actions. It has shaped, and been shaped by, many other forms of human activity including politics, intellectual movements, the arts, medicine and healing, and social behavior. The academic study of religion, therefore, is undertaken through diverse scholarly methodologies, and it treats religious experiences and ideas within a variety of cultural contexts in different periods. Students who wish to understand the manner in which religion, in its broadest terms, has contributed to the shaping of the human experience are encouraged to undertake a course of study that will allow them to delve deeply into questions that intrigue and inspire them.

The religious studies major makes the study of religion the focus of an education in the humanities and social sciences. The major draws students into an exploration of critical issues and themes that have shaped human life and thought in all time periods and in all cultures around the world. The major proposes a broad balance between breadth and depth for all students, and it requires each student to work out the particular balance of the course of study with the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Required courses for the Religious Studies major

The religious studies major requires completion of 30 credits. The same course may not fulfill more than one distribution requirement. Requirements may be taken in any order, but students are encouraged to take the introductory courses early in the major.

Note: These requirements are for students who declared the major on or after January 4, 2017. Students who declared the major prior to that date may opt to fulfill the new requirements or continue under the old requirements.

Introductory courses

RELGST 0105 Religions of the West
RELGST 0505 Religions of Asia

Survey course; select one of the following courses

RELGST 0025 Major Biblical Themes
RELGST 0405 Witchcraft to Walden Pond Religion in Early America
RELGST 0415 Religion in Modern America
RELGST 0455 Intro to Islamic Civilization
RELGST 0715 Philosophy of Religion
RELGST 1120 Origins of Christianity
RELGST 1130 Varieties of Christianity
RELGST 1135 Orthodox Christianity
RELGST 1210 Jews and Judaism-Ancient
RELGST 1220 Jews and Judaism-Medieval
RELGST 1250 Jews and Judaism-Modern
RELGST 1500 Religion in India 1
RELGST 1550 East Asian Buddhism
RELGST 1560 Chinese Religious Traditions
RELGST 1570 Japanese Religious Traditions

Thematic courses; three courses in one of the following thematic clusters.

Religion, Medicine, and the Body

RELGST 1143 Death in the Name of God - Martyrs and Martyrdom
RELGST 1150 Body and Society in Late Antiquity
RELGST 1151 Death in the Mediterranean World
RELGST 1405 Religion and Sexuality
RELGST 1554 Death and Beyond in Buddhist Cultures
RELGST 1558 Buddhism and Psychology
RELGST 1725 Death and the Healthcare Profession

Spirituality and Rationality

RELGST 0090 Myth in the Ancient Near East
RELGST 0735 Wisdom
RELGST 1100 Israel in the Biblical Age
RELGST 1140 Dualism in the Ancient World
RELGST 1142 Construction of Evil
RELGST 1145 Greco-Roman Religions
RELGST 1222 Jewish Mysticism
RELGST 1540 Saints East and West
RELGST 1545 Mysticism East and East
RELGST 1552 East Asian Meditative Traditions
RELGST 1610 Myth, Symbol, Ritual
RELGST 1760 Religion and Rationality
RELGST 1762 Guide to the Perplexed

Religion, Culture, and Creative Expression

RELGST 0435 Religion and Film
RELGST 0525 Religion and Culture in East Asia
RELGST 1148 Religions of Ancient Egypt
RELGST 1160 Jerusalem - History and Imagination
RELGST 1225 Jewish Culture in Medieval Spain
RELGST 1228 Exodus and Passover
RELGST 1425 Popular Religion in America
RELGST 1452 Hymns and HipHop Sounds of Islam
RELGST 1510 Religion in India 2 Storytelling as a Religious Form
RELGST 1557 Buddhist Lives
RELGST 1572 Popular Religion in a Changing Japan

Religion, Identity, and Global Problems

RELGST 1240 Jews and the City
RELGST 1241 Gender in Jewish History
RELGST 1252 History of the Holocaust
RELGST 1372 Catholicism in the New World
RELGST 1438 Religion and Politics
RELGST 1450 Islam and Politics
RELGST 1518 Religion and Ecology
RELGST 1520 Buddhism Along the Silk Road
RELGST 1642 History of Christian-Muslim Relations
RELGST 1644 Jewish-Christian Relations
RELGST 1620 Women in Religion
RELGST 1680 History and Memory in the Jewish Tradition
RELGST 1681 Zionism, Anti-Zionism, Post-Zionism

Distribution requirement

Students must take one course from each of the following lists.
These courses substantially treat major area subfields.

One course focusing on religion in Asia

RELGST 0525 Religion and Culture in East Asia
RELGST 1500 Religion in India 1
RELGST 1510 Religion in India 2 - Storytelling as a Religious Form
RELGST 1516 Temple, Icon and Deity in India
RELGST 1520 Buddhist Civilization
RELGST 1530 Topics in Buddhist Civilization
RELGST 1540 Saints East and West
RELGST 1545 Mysticism East and East
RELGST 1550 East Asian Buddhism
RELGST 1552 Chan/Zen Buddhism
RELGST 1554 Death and Beyond in Buddhist Cultures
RELGST 1557 Buddhist Lives
RELGST 1558 Buddhism and Psychology
RELGST 1560 Chinese Religious Traditions
RELGST 1562 Confucianism—Basic Texts
RELGST 1570 Japanese Religious Traditions
RELGST 1572 Popular Religions in a Changing Japan

One course focusing on ancient or classical religion in the Middle East and/or Europe

RELGST 0025 Major Biblical Themes
RELGST 0090 Myth in the Ancient Near East
RELGST 1100 Israel in the Biblical Age
RELGST 1120 Origins of Christianity
RELGST 1130 Varieties of Early Christianity
RELGST 1132 Paul
RELGST 1135 Orthodox Christianity
RELGST 1140 Dualism in the Ancient World
RELGST 1142 Construction of Evil
RELGST 1143 Death in the Name of God - Martyrs and Martyrdom
RELGST 1145 Greco-Roman Religions
RELGST 1148 Religions of Ancient Egypt
RELGST 1150 Body and Society in Late Antiquity
RELGST 1151 Death in the Mediterranean World
RELGST 1160 Jerusalem - History and Imagination
RELGST 1210 Classical Judaism
RELGST 1220 Medieval Jewish Civilization
RELGST 1222 Jewish Mysticism
RELGST 1225 Jewish Culture in Medieval Spain
RELGST 1400 Religion and Culture in America
RELGST 1454 Islamic Thought
RELGST 1540 Saints East and West
RELGST 1545 Mysticism East and East
RELGST 1624 Women and Judaism
RELGST 1640 Jews in the Islamic World
RELGST 1642 Christian-Muslim Relations
RELGST 1644 Jewish-Christian Relations
RELGST 1645 Jesus and Judaism
RELGST 1675 Reading the Hebrew Bible
RELGST 1680 Readings in Jewish Historiography
RELGST 1762 Guide to the Perplexed

One course focusing on modern or contemporary religion on the Middle East, Europe, or the Americas

RELGST 0405 Witches to Walden Pond Religion in Early America
RELGST 0415 Religion in Modern America
RELGST 0435 Religion, Literature and Film
RELGST 0455 Intro to Islamic Civilization
RELGST 0715 Philosophy of Religion
RELGST 1240 Jews and the City
RELGST 1241 Gender and Jewish History
RELGST 1250 Jews and Judaism - Modern
RELGST 1252 History of the Holocaust
RELGST 1256 Modern Israel
RELGST 1372 Catholicism in the New World
RELGST 1400 Religion and Culture in America
RELGST 1405 Religion and Sexuality
RELGST 1410 Religion in American Thought
RELGST 1412 Migration in American Religion
RELGST 1415 Race and Religion in America
RELGST 1425 Popular Religion in America
RELGST 1427 Religion and Law
RELGST 1438 Religion and Politics
RELGST 1450 Islam and Politics
RELGST 1452 Hymns and HipHop - Sounds of Islam
RELGST 1518 Religion and Ecology
RELGST 1681 Zionism, Anti-Zionism, Post-Zionism
RELGST 1725 Death and the Healthcare Professions
RELGST 1760 Religion and Rationality

Electives; three courses

Students must take one 10000-level RELGST course of their choice. The other two courses may include an internship, an undergraduate teaching assistantship, or a directed study course. The student must complete a minimum of nine credits in elective courses.

Capstone Seminar

RELGST 1903 Directed Research Seminar

Prerequisite: At least six RELGST courses

Related area: A minimum of 12 credits is required in any one Dietrich department chosen in consultation with the major advisor. The completion of an official Dietrich School minor or certificate or a UCIS certificate also satisfies this requirement. Students may wish to consult with the director of undergraduate studies for help formulating their options.

Grade requirements: All courses counted toward the major must be taken for a letter grade and completed with a C grade or above. At least five courses and the capstone seminar must be completed on the Oakland campus. Students transferring from other colleges or universities need to consult with the director of undergraduate studies about transferring courses and credits to be applied to the major.

Satisfactory/No Credit option: No more than three courses that count toward the major can be taken on an S/NC basis.

Writing (W) requirement: The capstone seminar fulfills the W-course requirement for this major.

Honors major requirements: Department honors require a GPA of 3.25 or higher in the major and a B+ or above in the capstone seminar.

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Requirements for the Religious Studies minor

The RELGST minor consists of 15 credits. Please see the department's Web site for more information.