

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

THE FACULTY

Julius Bailey
Karen Derris
Frances Grace
William B. Huntley
Lillian Larsen
John Walsh

THE MAJOR

The study of religious traditions explores the religious beliefs, actions, and cultural practices of individuals and communities across the world and throughout history. In the course of their studies, our students gain an inter-cultural literacy and an appreciation for the world views of other peoples and communities, as well as their own. Religious Studies courses approach the study of religion from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Students are invited to critically consider the spiritual, historical, literary, ethical, doctrinal, contemplative and social dimensions of religious people and practice. Through engaging the study of religions in an academic context, we seek to generate respect for the religious lives of all traditions. While many students find the study of religion is important for reflecting upon their own religious identity, no particular religious position is privileged or assumed in any of our courses.

Learning outcomes for this program may be found at: www.redlands.edu/BA-REL/learning-outcomes.

Bachelor of Arts

A major consists of ten courses and the senior capstone. The ten courses are to be fulfilled from the categories listed below.

ONE INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES:

Foundational courses provide students with a framework for understanding religious traditions and introduce students to the methods and approaches used to study religion.

- REL 125 World Religions (4)
- REL 131 American Religious History (4)
- OR the equivalent determined in consultation with a departmental advisor

TWO COURSES IN CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES:

Courses in Cultures and Communities introduce students to the diverse worlds in which religious communities have found—and continue to find—their form.

- REL 126 Asian Religions in Southern California (4)
- REL 145 Introduction to Islam (4)
- REL 165 Islam in America (4)
- REL 189 Religion and Popular Culture (3-4)
- REL 199 Cults and Sects: The History of New Religious Movements in America (4)
- REL 202 History of Judaism (4)
- REL 206 The 'Other' Jesus (4)

- REL 208 Global Christianities (4)
- REL 232 Hinduism(s) (4)
- REL 233 Buddhisms (4)
- REL 245 Queer Religiosities (4)
- REL 251 Women, Sexuality and Western Religion (4)
- REL 252 African-American Religion and Spirituality (4)
- REL 255 Gender in Islam (4)
- REL 325 Japanese Religion and Arts (4)
- REL 350 The History of Social Protest in America (4)
- REL 351 Women, Sexuality, and Buddhist Traditions (4)
- REST 231 Native American Women and Gender (4)
- REST 234 Race, Ethnicity and Religion (4)
- REST 346 Native American Religions and World Views (4)
- SOAN 233 Jewish Culture: Cooking and Community (3)
- SOAN 354 Jewish Identity (4)
- OR a topics course approved by departmental advisor

TWO COURSES IN TEXTS AND CONTEXTS:

Texts and Contexts courses invite students to engage in close and contextualized analysis of the textual traditions of a given religious tradition.

- REL 241 Ancient/Biblical Hebrew (take 2 course sequence, 2 credits each) (4)
- REL 242 Hellenistic Greek (take 2 course sequence, 2 credits each) (4)
- REL 265 The Prophet (4)
- REL 292 Sacred Life Stories in Asian Religious Traditions (4)
- REL 307 Old Testament Literature: Hebrew Scriptures (4)
- REL 308 Christian Scriptures (4)
- REL 330 Buddhist Literary Imagination (4)
- REL 411 Masterpieces of Asian Literature (4)
- ENGL 118 The Literature of the Bible (4)
- OR a topics course approved by departmental advisor

TWO COURSES IN RELIGION AND ETHICS:

Ethical teachings and practices are central to every religious tradition. The study of Religion and Ethics provides us with resources for addressing ethical crises in the world today.

- REL 120 Religion and Ethics (4)
- REL 122 Religion and Ecology: Environmental Ethics (4)
- REL 250 Compassion (4)
- REL 257 Science and Religion (4)
- REL 323 Mysticism (4)
- REL 358 Psychology and Religion (4)
- REST 242 Southern California Indian Relations with the Land (3)
- SOAN 232 Saints, Sects, and Society (4)
- OR a topics course approved by departmental advisor

In order to construct a course of study with sufficient breadth and depth, of the ten courses drawn from these categories, at least one 200 level (or above) focusing upon non-Western religions must be taken.

THREE ELECTIVES:

Three additional courses selected from the list above or a semester abroad program chosen in consultation with an advisor in the Religious Studies Department. REL 450 (2 credits) may be taken twice to count for one of the elected courses, as may other 2-credit REL classes.

CAPSTONE REQUIREMENT:

Two Senior Seminars:

- REL 490 Senior Seminar (2) (taken Fall semester of senior year)
- REL 495 Senior Seminar (2) (taken Spring semester of senior year)

Senior Religious Studies minors, Johnston seniors, and seniors from interdisciplinary programs may request permission to enroll in these seminars.

CAPSTONE PROJECT:

ONE of the following two capstone projects (specific guidelines and deadlines available for each option in the department office):

- Senior Thesis/Project: Substantial research paper that offers an original and in-depth examination of a topic approved by the student's advisor.
- Internship: Reflective engagement in a meaningful off-campus site of service or ministry, approved by one's advisor. Examples are a religious organization (church, temple, mosque, monastery), government agency, or non-profit organization. Students are encouraged to find a site that expands their learning related to an anticipated profession. The internship is meant to be in addition to the Community Service Learning Activity (CSAC) graduation requirement. Eighty hours are required, or the equivalent in consultation with one's advisor.

THE MINOR

At least one must be taken from each of the categories below.

INTRODUCTORY COURSE

- REL 125, REL 131, or the equivalent determined in consultation with a departmental advisor

ONE COURSE IN CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES:

- REL 126, REL 145, REL 165, REL 189, REL 199, REL 202, REL 206, REL 208, REL 232, REL 233, REL 245, REL 251, REL 252, REL 255, REL 325, REL 350, REL 351, REST 231, REST 234, REST 346, SOAN 233, SOAN 354, or a topics course approved by departmental advisor

ONE COURSE IN TEXTS AND CONTEXTS:

- REL 241, REL 242, REL 265, REL 292, REL 307, REL 308, REL 330, REL 411, ENGL 118, or a topics course approved by departmental advisor

ONE COURSE IN RELIGIONS AND ETHICS:

- REL 120, REL 122, REL 250, REL 257, REL 323, REL 358, REST 242, SOAN 232, or a topics course approved by departmental advisor

2 ELECTIVES:

- Two additional courses in consultation with a departmental advisor. 2-credit courses such as REL 450 may be taken twice to count as an elective for the minor.

STUDY ABROAD

Students majoring or minoring in Religious Studies will find it especially useful to complement the above courses by a semester of study abroad. Many institutions in Europe, Asia, and Australia have offerings in religious studies. Among the more valuable are the courses in Hebrew Scripture, Christian Scripture, and Islamic studies at the University of Edinburgh and the Oxford University. For Buddhism, consider the School for International Training (SIT) programs in Thailand; and, for Tibetan studies, the programs offered by SIT in India and Nepal.

DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

Requirements:

- 3.45 cumulative GPA
- Highly motivated and accomplished Religious Studies major
- Submission of Honors Thesis Proposal by early October
- Formation of a Faculty Committee (three members) for the Honors Thesis who will have the opportunity to give feedback at timely intervals of the project
- Submission of draft of Honors Thesis by early February, public presentation of the Honors Thesis and final evaluation for granting honors by faculty committee

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS (REL)

120 Religion and Ethics.

Fall (4).

Exploration of religious ethics in relation to contemporary issues in politics, medicine, biology, and law.

122 Religion and Ecology: Environmental Ethics.

Spring (4).

Consideration of the environmental crisis from a religious perspective, and a search to understand why ecology is a problematic concern within religion. Evaluation of theological, philosophical, and sociological factors that shape the various religious responses to ecological concerns.

125 Introduction to World Religions.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

By studying major religious traditions of the world, students will consider how religious traditions guide the way people live their lives in an ever increasingly diverse and religiously pluralistic world.

Investigations will include both historical studies and the writings of religious traditions.

126 Asian Religions in Southern California.

May Term (3).

Exploration of the dynamic Asian religious landscape of Southern California. Focus upon the preservation and transformation of received traditions as religious communities develop in Southern California. Consideration of the religious lives and experiences of immigrant communities and converted practitioners of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism.

Offered as needed.

131 American Religious History.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

Exploration of religion in America from the pre-colonial era to the present. Emphases will vary, drawing from a variety of religious communities (including Puritan, Native American, Muslim, Buddhist, African American, Hindu, Evangelical, Catholic, and Neo-Pagan) and issues (such as civil rights, "cults," church/state, gender, race, and ethnicity).

145 Introduction to Islam.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

This course introduces the foundational religious tenets that guide Islamic teaching and practice. Its aim is to provide students with a deeper understanding of the historical emergence and contemporary importance of Islamic thought, culture, legal systems, communal formation, and spiritual traditions.

Recommended: REL 125.

Offered as needed.

Numeric and Evaluation grade only.

160 Topics in Religion.

Fall (1–4), Spring (1–4), May Term (3).

Topics of current interest in religious studies. Course content varies from term to term. May be repeated for degree credit given a different topic.

Offered as needed.

165 Islam in America.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

This course will provide a thorough historical understanding of the roots of Islam in America and the situation of contemporary American Muslims in a post 9/11 world.

Recommended: REL 125 or REL 131.

Offered as needed.

189 Religion and Popular Culture.

Spring (4), May Term (3).

This course analyzes the interconnectedness of religion and popular culture and what it can tell us about the nature of religion in America.

199 Cults and Sects: the History of New Religious Movements in America.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

Offers an introduction to the variety of new religious movements. Examines the multiple ways these communities have been understood and what those constructions tell us about religion and identity.

Offered as needed.

202 History of Judaism.

Fall (4).

This course will use primary and secondary texts and stories to deepen students' understandings of the historical and cultural development of Judaism. Through close, critical reading, course lectures, and in-class discussions and presentations, students will undertake intensive historical analysis of Jewish faith and practice in ancient, medieval, and modern manifestations.

Offered as needed.

206 The 'Other' Jesus. Fall (4).

Study of biblical and extra-biblical recounting of the life and teachings of Jesus. Emphasis placed on reading ancient and contemporary life stories as critical resources for understanding emergent Christianity and the early Jewish/Christian world—in space and over time.

Offered in alternate years.

208 Global Christianities.

Spring (4).

Through studying key figures, movements, and themes, students will learn about the origins, historical development, major controversies, and emergent trends that shape the Christian teaching and praxis.

Attention will be given to social, political, economic, global, and cultural analysis.

Offered in alternate years.

210 Introduction to Meditation.

Fall (2), Spring (2).

This course, which is primarily experiential, introduces students to a range of meditation methods and contemplative practices.

May be repeated for credit, maximum 8 credits.

Credit/no credit only.

226 Religions in Europe.

May Term (3).

Designed as a travel course for May Term, this course journeys to European cities and deals with several religions found there. A daily journal is required, discussing readings done in preparation, interviews with locals, and visits to religious sites, museums and marketplaces.

232 Hinduism(s).

Fall (4).

Explores the many ways Hindu beliefs and practices shape and are shaped by the communities and individuals who live their lives, defined in infinitely variable ways, as adherents of Hindu traditions.

Prerequisite: REL 125 recommended.

233 Buddhisms.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

Considers the variety of ways that Buddhists have engaged with the “three jewels” of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (the teaching), and the Sangha (the Buddhist community). Examination of doctrine, practice, and culture in different parts of the Buddhist world in a variety of historical periods.

Numeric grade only.

Offered in alternate years.

241 Ancient/Biblical Hebrew.

Fall (2), Spring (2).

Elementary Hebrew grammar and composition with emphasis on Biblical vocabulary and syntax. In this course, we will read, in Hebrew, the entire book of Ruth. This course will meet once a week for two consecutive semesters.

242 Hellenistic Greek.

Fall (2), Spring (2).

Hellenistic Greek grammar and composition with emphasis on using ancient pedagogical strategies to explore Classical, Hellenistic, Jewish, and Early Christian sources. This course meets once each week during both fall and spring terms. Students may register for one or both semesters.

Offered in alternate years.

245 Queer Religiosities.

Fall (4).

Lesbian/gay issues have sparked major controversies in Christianity and Judaism. Debates are emerging in Islam and other religions. Topics include: religious acceptance versus demands to change, sacred text interpretations, ordination, marriage/civil unions, parenting, hate crimes, sexuality education, political rights. Focus is on lesbian/gay approaches and responses.

250 Compassion.

Spring (4), May Term (3).

Explores what it means to live a life of compassion through these lenses: 1) biographical models such as Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, The Dalai Lama, Mary Oliver, Viktor Frankl, and Mother Teresa; 2) the compassion teachings of the world's religions; 3) the psychology of compassion ; 4) experiential investigation of compassion practices.

Offered as needed.

Numeric grade only.

251 Women, Sexuality, and Western Religion.

Spring (4).

Consideration of a range of women's roles in Western religions. Examination of tension between women's subordination and liberation in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Sources include Christian and Hebrew bibles, church fathers and mothers, new views of women's history and feminist analysis of religion, and contemporary goddess spirituality.

Offered in alternate years.

252 African-American Religion and Spirituality.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

Intermediate-level lecture and discussion course, which is an examination of religious themes in African-American experience, including slavery, Black Church denominations (mainstream and Holiness), Black Nationhood and civil rights movements, Black Muslims, Black and Womanist (Black feminist) theologies, African religions in the Americas (Santeria and Voudoun), and new spiritual visions.

Offered in alternate years.

255 Gender in Islam.

Fall (4)

This course offers comprehensive analysis of the factors that shape perceptions of Islamic women. To better understand the dynamic role of women in Islamic tradition, students will explore gendered space, the mystical dimensions of female Sufis, media portrayals of Muslim women, and engage debates about veiling, circumcision, education, and Islamophobia.

Recommended: REL 125.

Offered as needed.

Numeric and Evaluation grade only.

257 Science and Religion.

Spring (4).

Exploration of differences as well as the intersections between the scientific and religious quests for ultimate truth. Emphasis will vary, including topics such as evolution and creationism, neuro-scientific experiments on religious experiences (e.g., love, forgiveness, altruism, healing, meditation), quantum mechanics, energy theories, Deep Ecology, human nature, and nature. Prerequisites: one course in religious studies and one course in science, or by permission.

Offered as needed.

260 Topics in Religion.

Fall (1–4), Spring (1–4), May Term (3).

Topics of current interest in religious studies. Course content varies from term to term. May be repeated for degree credit given a different topic.

Offered as needed.

265 The Prophet.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

This course will provide a thorough and multifaceted examination of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad. Students will examine the Prophet's historical life through multiple lenses from the classical period to modernity, and from the perspectives of communities that span the globe.

Recommended: REL 125 or REL 160.

Offered as needed.

Credit/no credit only.

290 Meditation: Intermediate Practicum.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

Explore the effects of meditation through daily practice of specific techniques from various religious, spiritual, and secular frameworks. The techniques selected will vary according to instructor.

Mindfulness, meditation and contemplative practices have been shown to foster wellbeing. This course is an opportunity to research the effects for yourself.

292 Sacred Life-stories in Asian Religious Traditions.

Spring (4).

Sacred life-stories told in the form of biographies, hagiographies, or autobiographies offer their audiences—both historical and present-day readers—critical resources for understanding and interpreting religious worlds. Consists of a close reading of a broad range of life-stories from Buddhist, Hindu, and Chinese religious traditions.

Offered in alternate years.

307 Old Testament Literature: Hebrew Scriptures.

Fall (4).

Close reading of selected books from Torah, prophets, and writings in English translation. The method is historical and literary with student compositions on a chapter in Genesis, a Biblical text about a woman, a psalm, and a book review of a modern feminist.

308 Christian Scriptures.

Spring (4).

Through situating canonical and extracanonical texts within their Jewish and Greco-Roman frame, this course engages the complex social, cultural and historical fabrics of the writings included in Christian Scripture. Close reading, informed by critical debate, invites students to explore contemporary manifestations of ancient teaching and practice—in space and over time.

323 Quest of the Mystic: The Inner Path.

Spring (4).

Examines the intense inner quest and culminating spiritual realizations by mystics and sages found in every religion. The topic is explored through three lenses: 1) biographical study of representative mystics; 2) comparative analysis of the teachings about Self-Realization, Enlightenment, Divine Union, states of consciousness, and spiritual evolution; and 3) first-person investigation of contemplative methods recommended by the mystics under study.

Offered as needed.

325 Japanese Religion and Arts.

May Term (3).

This course will give students the opportunity to read about Japanese religions and art forms, then visit religious settings and museums. Meanwhile, we will be visiting Japanese schools and given the opportunity to teach Japanese children and university students by engaging in discussions.

330 Buddhist Literary Imaginations.

Fall (4), Spring (4).

Examines how Buddhism is imagined and constructed in literary texts within and outside of Buddhist traditions. Readings from both Buddhist literature and modern fiction from around the world about Buddhism are used in order to explore Buddhist social, ethical, and historical realities.

Prerequisite: sophomore standing or by permission.

Offered in alternate years.

350 The History of Social Protest in America.

Spring (4).

This course examines the influence of religion on the origins and development of the pan-ethnic civil rights movement in the U.S. from the 1950's to the 1970's by focusing on the African American, Mexican American/Chicano, and American Indian Movement (AIM) struggles.

Offered as needed.

Credit/no credit only.

351 Women, Sexuality, and Buddhist Traditions.

Fall (4).

Exploration of the diverse roles and representations of women in multiple Buddhist traditions, past and present. Special attention is given to the historical agency of Buddhist women in shaping Buddhist traditions and in creating possibilities for various forms of participation in these institutions throughout the Buddhist world.

Offered in alternate years.

358 Psychology and Religion.

Spring (4).

Investigates the intersections of psychological theories, religious commitment and coping, differing views of human wholeness, cross-cultural approaches to healing and mental health, psyche / soma connection, spiritual process and addiction, peak experiences and the nature of consciousness. Explores the diversity of transpersonal psychologies found in the major world religions.

411 Masterpieces of Asian Literature.

Spring (4).

Classics from Asian literature that treat religious themes such as the Dhammapada, the Ramayana, the Tale of Genji, and the Sound of the Wave. Major focus on Indian and Japanese literature.

Offered as needed.

450 Jameson Center Colloquia.

Fall (2), Spring (2).

Students enrolled in this course will participate in all the Monday afternoon colloquia of the Jameson Center for the Study of Religion and Ethics. A faculty associate of the Jameson Center will supervise participation, including negotiation of a contract for each student's responses to the colloquia. May be repeated for degree credit for a maximum of 8 credits.

Credit/no credit only.

490 Senior Seminar.

Fall (2).

The Senior Seminar is designed to allow students to synthesize their training in Religious Studies and to complete their capstone project.

Prerequisite: Religious Studies major or minor or by permission.

495 Senior Seminar.

Spring (2).

The Senior Seminar is designed to allow students to synthesize their training in Religious Studies and to complete their capstone project.

Prerequisite: Religious Studies major or minor or by permission.