

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Courses offered by the Department of Religious Studies are listed under the subject code RELIGST on the Stanford Bulletin's ExploreCourses web site.

Mission of the Department

The Department of Religious Studies brings a variety of disciplinary perspectives to bear on the phenomenon of religion for the purpose of understanding and interpreting the history, literature, thought, social structures, and practices of the religious traditions of the world. Comprised of a dozen regular faculty with particular strengths in the study of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, it enrolls about thirty graduate students (mostly doctoral) and roughly as many undergraduate majors, minors, and joint majors.

Religious Studies works closely with several related programs at Stanford: the Department of Philosophy, with which it offers a combined undergraduate major; the Ho Center for Buddhist Studies; the Taube Center for Jewish Studies; the Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies; the McCoy Center for Ethics in Society; and the Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies.

While some undergraduates continue their study of religion in a graduate or professional program, most pursue meaningful and successful careers in business, government, the nonprofit sector, and medicine. In this respect, Religious Studies is an ideal interdisciplinary major in the liberal arts. Graduates of the department's doctoral program generally pursue academic careers and are routinely placed in the best universities and colleges in the country and overseas.

Undergraduate Programs in Religious Studies

The department offers a Bachelor of Arts major, minor, and honors program in Religious Studies, and a combined major with the Philosophy Department in Philosophy and Religious Studies. Undergraduate courses in Religious Studies are designed to engage students existentially and to assist them in thinking about intellectual, ethical, and sociopolitical issues in the world's religions. The department's faculty seek to provide tools for understanding the complex encounters among religious ideas, practices, and communities, and the past and present cultures that have shaped and been shaped by religion. Courses therefore expose students to: leading concepts in the field of religious studies such as god(s), sacrifice, ritual, scripture, prophecy, and priesthood; approaches developed over the past century, including the anthropological, historical, psychological, philosophical, and phenomenological, that open religion to closer inspection and analysis; and major questions, themes, developments, features, and figures in the world's religious traditions. The department encourages and supports the acquisition of languages needed for engagement with sacred texts and interpretive traditions as well as study abroad at Stanford's overseas centers where religions can be observed and experienced in their contemporary contexts.

Major in Philosophy and Religious Studies

The departments of Philosophy and Religious Studies jointly nominate for the B.A. in Philosophy and Religious Studies those students who have completed a major in the two disciplines. See a description of this combined major under the "Bachelor's" tab of the "Religious Studies" section of this bulletin (p. 1), in the "Philosophy" section of this bulletin (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/schoolofhumanitiesandsciences/philosophy/#bachelorstext>), or in the guidelines available from the undergraduate director of either department.

Learning Outcomes (Undergraduate)

The department expects undergraduate majors in the program to be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes. These learning outcomes are used in evaluating students and the department's undergraduate program. Students are expected to:

1. demonstrate familiarity with a variety of methods used analytically in the field of Religious Studies.
2. demonstrate proficiency in writing papers in the style of academic writing in the field of Religious Studies.
3. demonstrate the ability to engage peer scholars' research in constructive and critical ways, and communicate feedback effectively.
4. demonstrate individual expertise through oral presentation of one's advanced research to peers.
5. complete an advanced research project consistent with standards for papers in the field of Religious Studies.

Graduate Programs in Religious Studies

The graduate mission of the department is to provide students with an interdisciplinary setting of study within which to focus on their respective areas of specialization. The department offers an internal M.A. and a Ph.D. degree in Religious Studies. The master's program is restricted to current Stanford students.

Learning Outcomes (Graduate)

Master's Program: The purpose of the Master's program is to develop knowledge and skills in Religious Studies. For some students this will serve as preparation for applications to Ph.D. programs. For others it will serve as a further capstone experience for their undergraduate program of study. The goals are achieved through the completion of courses, in the primary field as well as related areas, and experience with independent work and specialization. For some it will involve an optional Master's thesis.

Doctoral Program: The Ph.D. is conferred upon candidates who have demonstrated substantial scholarship and the ability to conduct independent research and analysis in Religious Studies. Through completion of advanced coursework and rigorous skills training, the doctoral program prepares students to make original contributions to the field of Religious Studies and to interpret and present the results of such research through teaching and publication.

Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies

Suggested Preparation for the Major

There is no prescribed route or prerequisite to the major or minor in Religious Studies or the combined major in Philosophy and Religious Studies. Students typically find themselves selecting one of these paths after taking elective courses in the department and becoming acquainted with the faculty.

Students contemplating the major, the minor, or the Philosophy and Religious Studies major are invited to consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies. The undergraduate student services associate in Building 70 can also field questions regarding the declaration procedure within the department.

Degree Requirements

The curriculum for majors is designed to move students sequentially from foundational courses, through deeper investigations, culminating in integrative research courses. Thus, the introductory sequence is designed to lead to courses which build on this foundation with topics including: particular traditions such as Judaism or Buddhism; comparative studies such as nonviolence in Hinduism and Buddhism, or

Muslim and Christian interpretations of scripture; specific topics such as mysticism, gender and religion, or theodicy; and distinctive approaches such as the philosophy of religion or ritual studies. Majors complete their careers with integrative courses that afford opportunity for research and consolidation of the knowledge and skills gained earlier.

Required Courses

A Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies requires 60 units of course work, distributed as follows:

1. Two courses (at least 3 units each) from courses numbered 1-49, including approved Thinking Matters or Introductory Seminars. Successful completion of SLE may count as one of these two courses. IHUM courses with Religious Studies content taught prior to 2012-13 also fulfill this requirement.
2. Two courses (at least 3 units each) from courses numbered 50-99.
3. Three integrative courses (at least five units each) as follows:

Majors' Seminar (5)

RELIGST 290	Majors Seminar (Winter Quarter of junior year; fulfills WIM requirement; letter grade only)	5
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Senior Essay or Honors Thesis Research (5)

RELIGST 297	Senior Essay/Honors Essay Research (minimum 5 units; up to 10 units over two quarters; graded 'N' until completion of essay or thesis)	3-5
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Senior Majors' Colloquium (5)

RELIGST 298	Senior Colloquium (Spring Quarter; grading option S/NC)	5
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4. At least 24 of the remaining units should be in courses numbered 100-289. At least two of these courses should be 200-level seminar courses.

Additional Regulations

1. Variations to the required distribution of courses under 1 and 2 above may be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies on an individual basis.
2. All units must be in Religious Studies courses unless an exception is made by the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
3. With the approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies, up to two language courses relating to the student's program of study (such as Arabic, Biblical Hebrew, New Testament Greek, Chinese, Persian, or Japanese), but not counted towards the University language requirement, may be counted toward the major.
4. No more than ten units of the total 60 (excluding RELIGST 298) may be taken for the grade of 'S/NC' or 'CR/NC.'
5. Students may not take all courses in one religious tradition.

Senior Essay

A 25-30 page essay on a topic chosen by the student and approved by the adviser upon receipt of a student's proposal by the end of the third quarter prior to expected graduation. The character and content of the essay, which is meant to allow the student to call into play knowledge and skills learned in the course of the major, may take several forms. For example, a student may return to a subject studied earlier but now pursued in more depth or from a new perspective, research a recent or new topic of interest in the field, or offer a carefully framed critical assessment of what has been learned in the major based on review of influential sources, theories, and methods of studying religion. The senior essay is read and graded by the student's adviser and one other member of the Religious Studies faculty.

Honors Thesis

A 40-80 page research paper on a topic chosen by the student and approved by the adviser upon receipt of a proposal in the fourth quarter prior to expected graduation. The paper, supported by mastery of primary and secondary scholarship, advances a well-reasoned, supportable thesis. Writers of honors theses must have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 in Religious Studies courses, and at least 3.2 overall, and are expected to have already demonstrated success in writing research papers. The honors thesis is read and graded by the student's adviser and one other member of the Religious Studies faculty. Theses earning a grade of 'B+' or above receive honors.

Philosophy and Religious Studies Combined Major

The undergraduate major in Philosophy and Religious Studies consists of 60 units of course work with approximately one third each in the philosophy core, the religious studies core, and either the general major or the special concentration. Affiliated courses cannot be used to satisfy this requirement.

No courses in either the philosophy or religious studies core may be taken satisfactory/no credit or credit/no credit.

In general, transfer units cannot be used to satisfy the core requirements. Transfer units and substitutions must be approved by the director of undergraduate studies in the appropriate department.

Please see a detailed description of the major in the "Philosophy" section of this Bulletin (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/schoolofhumanitiesandsciences/philosophy/#bachelorstext-joinmajophilrelistud>).

Core Requirements

1. Philosophy (PHIL) courses:
 - a. Required course: PHIL 80 Mind, Matter, and Meaning
 - b. 16 units, including at least one Philosophy course from each of the following areas:
 - i logic and philosophy of science
 - ii ethics and value theory
 - iii epistemology, metaphysics, and philosophy of language
 - iv history of philosophy
2. Religious Studies (RELIGST) courses: 20 units, chosen in consultation with the student's adviser, including:
 - a. Required Course: RELIGST 290 Majors Seminar (5 units; Winter Quarter; recommended junior year; fulfills WIM requirement).
 - b. At least one course in philosophy of religion, broadly construed, to be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies for Religious Studies.
 - c. Diversity requirement: Students may not take all their religion courses in one religious tradition.

General Major Requirements

Five additional courses (approximately 20 units) divided between the two departments. No more than five of these units may come from courses numbered under 99 in either department. Each student must also take at least one undergraduate seminar in religious studies and one undergraduate seminar in philosophy.

Special Concentration

With the aid of an adviser, students pursue a specialized form of inquiry in which the combined departments have strength; for example, American philosophy and religious thought, philosophical and religious

theories of human nature and action, philosophy of religion. Courses for this concentration must be approved in writing by the adviser.

Directed Reading and Satisfactory/No Credit Units

Units of directed reading for fulfilling requirements of the major are allowed only with special permission. No more than 10 units of work with a grade of 'satisfactory' count toward the Philosophy and Religious Studies major.

Honors Program

Students pursuing a major in Philosophy and Religious Studies may also apply for honors by following the procedure for honors in either of the departments.

Minor in Religious Studies

A Religious Studies minor is a complement to many majors throughout the University. Students contemplating the minor are invited to consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies. The undergraduate student services associate in Bldg. 70 can also field questions regarding the declaration procedure within the department.

Degree Requirements

A minor in Religious Studies requires a minimum of 30 units. Students are encouraged to focus their program of study either on a religious tradition or on a theme that cuts across traditions. In consultation with their advisers, students may design the minor in Religious Studies to complement their major. The minor must be declared no later than the last day of the quarter, two quarters before degree conferral.

Required Courses for the Minor

1. One course (at least 3 units) from courses numbered 1-49, including approved Thinking Matters or Introductory Seminars. IHUM courses with Religious Studies content taught prior to 2012-13 also fulfill this requirement.
2. One course (at least 3 units) from courses numbered 50-99.
3. At least 14 of the remaining units should be at the intermediate and advanced level (above 100), including at least one 200-level seminar course.

Additional Regulations

1. All units must be in Religious Studies courses unless an exception is made by the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
2. With the approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies, one language course relating to the student's program of study (such as Arabic, Biblical Hebrew, New Testament Greek, Chinese, Persian, or Japanese), but not counted towards the University language requirement, may be counted toward the minor.
3. No course may be taken on a 'S/NC' or 'CR/NC' basis.
4. Students may not take all courses in one religious tradition.
5. One course in directed reading (RELIGST 199 Individual Work) may be counted towards the minor.

Master of Arts in Religious Studies

University requirements for the M.A. are described in the "Graduate Degrees (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/graduatedegrees>)" section of this bulletin. The department offers a one-year terminal M.A. program. Students can also earn their M.A. degree as part of their coterminal degree program.

The M.A. program serves two groups of students:

1. those who wish to prepare for a doctoral program in Religious Studies
2. those who wish to further deepen their knowledge in an area in which they have acquired some expertise during their undergraduate work.

At this time, eligibility for admission to the master's program is restricted to current Stanford undergraduates and graduate students.

Degree Requirements

The following requirements are in addition to the University's basic requirements (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/graduatedegrees>).

The student completes at least 45 units of graduate work at Stanford beyond the B.A. degree, including RELIGST 300 Theory in the Study of Religion or RELIGST 290 Majors Seminar. Students who have taken this course as part of the B.A. need not take it again.

Residence may be completed by three quarters of full-time work or the equivalent.

The student's plan of courses is subject to approval by the Graduate Director. No field of specialization is expected, but students may focus work in particular areas. Advanced and graduate courses in other departments may be taken in consultation with the adviser. No thesis is required; a thesis, if elected, may count for as many as 9 units.

Each student demonstrates reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.

The department allows coterminals to count courses as early as their first quarter of sophomore year toward their master's degree. Course transfers require department approval and cannot be processed after the bachelor's degree has been conferred. All University coterminal policies apply.

Application and Admissions

At this time, eligibility for admission to the master's program is restricted to current Stanford undergraduates and graduate students.

Current Stanford Undergraduates

Religious Studies accepts coterminal applications in Winter Quarter (due end of the second week of classes) for admission starting Spring Quarter. Only complete applications submitted by the deadline are reviewed. A complete application includes the following:

- Complete Coterminal Application
- Two confidential letters of recommendation, one of which must be from a Stanford faculty member familiar with applicant's academic work
- Statement of purpose, not to exceed two pages
- Undergraduate transcript(s)
- Preliminary program proposal

Current Stanford Graduate Students

- Application for Current Stanford Graduate Students
- Two confidential letters of recommendation, one of which must be from a Stanford faculty member familiar with applicant's academic work
- Undergraduate and graduate transcripts
- Statement of purpose, not to exceed two pages
- Preliminary program proposal

University Coterminal Requirements

Coterminal master's degree candidates are expected to complete all master's degree requirements as described in this bulletin. University requirements for the coterminal master's degree are described in the "Coterminal Master's Program (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/cotermdegrees>)" section. University requirements for the master's degree are described in the "Graduate Degrees (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/graduatedegrees/#masterstext>)" section of this bulletin.

After accepting admission to this coterminal master's degree program, students may request transfer of courses from the undergraduate to the graduate career to satisfy requirements for the master's degree. Transfer of courses to the graduate career requires review and approval of both the undergraduate and graduate programs on a case by case basis.

In this master's program, courses taken during or after the first quarter of the sophomore year are eligible for consideration for transfer to the graduate career; the timing of the first graduate quarter is not a factor. No courses taken prior to the first quarter of the sophomore year may be used to meet master's degree requirements.

Course transfers are not possible after the bachelor's degree has been conferred.

The University requires that the graduate adviser be assigned in the student's first graduate quarter even though the undergraduate career may still be open. The University also requires that the Master's Degree Program Proposal be completed by the student and approved by the department by the end of the student's first graduate quarter.

Financial Aid

The Religious Studies department does not provide financial assistance to coterminal or master's students. For information on student loans and other sources of support, consult the Financial Aid Office (<http://financialaid.stanford.edu>).

Doctor of Philosophy in Religious Studies

University requirements for the Ph.D. are described in the "Graduate Degrees (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/graduatedegrees>)" section of this bulletin. The Ph.D. in Religious Studies signifies special knowledge of an interdisciplinary field of study and potential mastery of an area of specialization within it. The faculty of the department have established certain fields of study in which the department's strengths and those of other Stanford departments cohere. They are: Buddhist studies, Islamic studies, Jewish studies, and modern religious thought, ethics, and philosophy. Students who wish to specialize in other fields must obtain early approval by the faculty. Each of these areas of specialization follows a shared structure of study.

Degree Requirements

The following requirements are in addition to the University's basic requirements.

1. Residence

Each student completes three years (nine quarters) of full-time study, or the equivalent, in graduate work beyond the B.A. degree, and a minimum of 135 units of graduate course work (excluding the dissertation).

2. Required Courses

The 135 units of graduate course work must include the following:

a.			
	RELIGST 304A	Theories and Methods	4
	RELIGST 304B	Theories and Methods	4
	RELIGST 391	Teaching Religious Studies	3

b. Two courses in an area outside the student's field.

c. The remainder of the course work is individually designed, in consultation with the adviser.

3. Languages

Each student demonstrates a reading knowledge of two foreign languages, including French or German. One of those language requirements should be fulfilled by the time of advancing to candidacy at the end of the second year. Competence in the second language must be demonstrated at the time of the qualifying examination. Each student also demonstrates reading knowledge of

other ancient or modern languages necessary for the field of study, area of specialization, and dissertation topic.

4. Candidacy

At the end of each academic year, the department's faculty recommend second-year students for candidacy on the basis of all relevant information, and especially on the student's candidacy dossier that includes the approved declaration of an area of specialization, certification for one foreign language, and two substantial papers written for courses during the previous two years. Students are required to take RELIGST 304A Theories and Methods, RELIGST 304B Theories and Methods, and RELIGST 391 Teaching Religious Studies prior to candidacy.

5. Paper-in-Field

During the third year, under the supervision of their advisers, students prepare a paper suitable for submission to an academic journal in their field. The paper is read and approved by at least two faculty members in the department. Students are encouraged to register for RELIGST 392 Paper in the Field while working on the paper.

6. Teaching Internship

At least one teaching internship under the supervision of faculty members is undertaken at a time negotiated with the Graduate Director. Students receive academic credit for the required internship, which is a part of academic training and not of employment.

7. Qualifying Examination

To qualify for writing a dissertation, the student must pass a comprehensive examination in the chosen field and the area of specialization, typically during the first quarter of their fourth year. The student must complete the second language requirement before taking the qualifying examination. The qualifying examination is normally conducted by a committee of at least three Academic Council members of the department, one of whom is the adviser. One faculty member may be from outside the department with permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

8. Dissertation

The dissertation contributes to the humanistic study of religion and is written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation adviser and at least two other members of the Academic Council. The University Oral examination is a defense of a completed draft of the dissertation.

a. *Dissertation Committee*—The dissertation committee is formed after successful completion of the qualifying examinations. It is normally composed of the dissertation adviser and at least two Academic Council members of the Religious Studies department. One non-departmental faculty member may serve as a reader when approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

b. *Dissertation Proposal*—Candidates submit their dissertation proposal in consultation with their advisers. It is read and approved by the three members of the dissertation committee.

9. University Oral Examination

This examination, required by the University of Ph.D. students, is a defense of a completed draft of the dissertation. The composition of the examination committee is set by University regulation: five or more faculty, normally all of whom are members of the Academic Council, one of whom must be outside the department to serve as chair of the committee. Normally, the examining committee includes all members of the dissertation committee. A majority of those voting must be Academic Council faculty from within the department.

Ph.D. Minor in Religious Studies

Candidates for the Ph.D. in other departments may select a Ph.D. minor in Religious Studies.

Degree Requirements

The minor requires at least 24 units in Religious Studies at the 200 level or above. Four of the 24 units should be in:

	Units
RELIGST 304A Theories and Methods	4
RELIGST 304B Theories and Methods	4

Optional Courses for the Minor

The student should choose any of the courses offered in the department at the 200 level or above, for the equivalent of at least 24 units. Other courses can be chosen in consultation with the Graduate Director.

Faculty

Emeriti: (Professors) Carl W. Bielefeldt, Arnold Eisen, Bernard Faure, Hester G. Gelber, Robert C. Gregg, Van Harvey

Chair: John Kieschnick

Director of Graduate Study: Paul Harrison

Director of Undergraduate Study: Brent Sockness

Professors: Paul Harrison, John Kieschnick, Michael Penn, Jane Shaw, Thomas Sheehan, Lee Yearley

Associate Professors: Charlotte Fonrobert (on leave), Brent Sockness

Assistant Professors: Elaine Fisher, Kathryn Gin Lum, Ariel Mayse, Michaela Mross

Senior Lecturer: Barbara Pitkin

Lecturers: Manuel de Oliveira, Eric Huntington, Alaina Morgan, Sarah Wilburn

Courtesy Professor: Mark Lewis

Courtesy Associate Professor: Ari Y. Kelman

Affiliated Faculty: Fiona Griffiths

Cognate Courses

The following courses in other departments/programs have been approved by the Chair as fulfilling requirement 2 (p.) for the bachelor's degree.

	Units
POLISCI 149S Islam, Iran, and the West	5
HISTORY 293E Female Divinities in China	4-5

Overseas Studies Courses in Religious Studies

The Bing Overseas Studies Program (<http://bosp.stanford.edu>) manages Stanford study abroad programs for Stanford undergraduates. Students should consult their department or program's student services office for applicability of Overseas Studies courses to a major or minor program.

The Bing Overseas Studies course search site (<https://undergrad.stanford.edu/programs/bosp/explore/search-courses>) displays courses, locations, and quarters relevant to specific majors.

For course descriptions and additional offerings, see the listings in the Stanford Bulletin's ExploreCourses (<http://explorecourses.stanford.edu>) or Bing Overseas Studies (<http://bosp.stanford.edu>).

	Units
OSPKYOTO 13 Contemporary Religion in Japan's Ancient Capital: Sustaining and Recasting Tradition	4
OSPMADRD 74 Islam in Spain and Europe: 1300 Years of Contact	4