Undergraduate Program in Religious Studies

Religious Studies includes an interdisciplinary major and minor that focus on the comparative understanding of the various ways different peoples, across space and through time, have developed their religious ideas, values, systems, beliefs, rituals, and traditions in response to fundamental questions of human existence. The curriculum seeks to provide a wide-ranging academic understanding and knowledge of the religious experience in society through study in the Schools of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Social Ecology, and the Claire Trevor School of the Arts. As an interdisciplinary academic discipline, the study of religion offers a rigorous, systematic, and dispassionate intellectual inquiry into various aspects of religious systems, their practitioners and outlooks, and their goals and expressions. It employs a wide variety of approaches and methods in order to understand the role of religion in both human experience and thought.

Students in the Religious Studies major complete an emphasis in either Judaism/Christianity/Islam or in World Religious Traditions.

Careers for the Religious Studies Major

Majoring in Religious Studies is an excellent preparation for living in a multicultural society and for a variety of careers in counseling, teaching, commerce, writing, government, the arts, and professional religious leadership. The major’s emphasis on broad understanding, critical thinking skills, and clear written expression provides an effective springboard for graduate study in the humanities and social science or professional schools in medicine, law, or business.

The UCI Career Center provides services to students and alumni including career counseling, information about job opportunities, a career library, and workshops on resume preparation, job search, and interview techniques. See the Career Center (http://catalogue.uci.edu/previouseditions/2014-15/informationforadmittedstudents/lifeoncampus/#careerctrtext) section for additional information.

Requirements for the B.A. Degree in Religious Studies

All students must meet the University Requirements (http://catalogue.uci.edu/previouseditions/2014-15/informationforadmittedstudents/requirementsforabachelorsdegree).

All students must meet the School Requirements (http://catalogue.uci.edu/previouseditions/2014-15/schoolofhumanities/#undergraduateprogramstext).

Requirements for the Major

A. Complete:

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<tr>
<td>REL STD 5A</td>
<td>World Religions I</td>
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<td>REL STD 5B</td>
<td>World Religions II</td>
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<td>REL STD 5C</td>
<td>Religious Dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL STD 110</td>
<td>Thinking about Religion: Theories and Methodologies</td>
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B. Select six upper-division electives, two in each of the following categories:

1. Judaism/Christianity/Islam
2. World Religious Traditions
3. Thematic Approaches to Religion

C. Completion of an emphasis in either Judaism/Christianity/Islam or in World Religious Traditions: select two additional upper-division courses from either category 1 or 2 above.

Selected from the approved lists published on the Religious Studies (http://www.humanities.uci.edu/religious_studies) website. For examples of approved courses, see below. One relevant lower-division course may be substituted for an upper-division course, with prior approval.

Studying Abroad: Students are encouraged to study abroad and may be able to satisfy a significant portion of their requirements abroad. Courses taken abroad must be approved by the Director of Religious Studies in order to be applied toward major requirements.

Residence Requirement for the Major: A minimum of five upper-division courses required for the major must be completed successfully at UCI.

Requirements for the Minor

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Undergraduate Program in Religious Studies

REL STD 5C  Religious Dialogue
REL STD 110  Thinking about Religion: Theories and Methodologies

Four upper-division electives selected from the three categories under B above, including at least one course from both categories 1 and 2. Two of the four courses must be outside of the student's major. One relevant lower-division course may be substituted for an upper-division course, with prior approval.

Residence Requirement for the Minor: Four upper-division courses required for the minor must be completed successfully at UCI. Two of the four may be taken through the UC Education Abroad Program, provided course content is approved by the Director of the Religious Studies program.

Categories and Approved Courses

The complete list of approved courses varies from quarter to quarter, depending upon course scheduling. For complete up-to-date information on approved courses, please consult the Religious Studies (http://www.humanities.uci.edu/religious_studies) website.

Courses

REL STD 5A. World Religions I. 4 Units.
An introduction to the history, doctrine, culture, and writing of the three "religions of Abraham": Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Same as HISTORY 16A.

(IV, VIII)

REL STD 5B. World Religions II. 4 Units.
An introduction to various religious traditions in selected areas of the world—including India and South Asia, East Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

Same as HISTORY 16B.

(IV, VIII)

REL STD 5C. Religious Dialogue. 4 Units.
Lectures and discussion on controversial topics in religion: sexual morality; religious violence; science; treatment of women and girls; religious truth, American Constitutional matters; secularization; the future of religion, and other topics.

Same as HISTORY 16C.

(IV, VIII)

REL STD 17. An Economic Approach to Religion. 4 Units.
Introduction to how basic economic concepts such as demand, supply, consumption, production, competition, free-riding, innovation, regulation, and rent-seeking can be applied to understand observed religious behavior.

Same as ECON 17.

(III)

REL STD 21. Philosophy and Religion. 4 Units.
Examines the intersection of religion and philosophy from a standpoint that does not presuppose previous academic study of either. Both Western and Eastern traditions and perspectives may be explored.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 56. Society and Religion. 4 Units.
A critical and personal examination of the varieties of religious and spiritual experience human beings are undergoing in contemporary society. The role of conscious understanding and unconscious conditioning regarding religion and spirituality.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 60. Gender and Religion. 4 Units.
A presentation in selected issues in the study of gender and religion.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

(III, VIII)
REL STD 90. Aspects of Religion. 4 Units.
A presentation of selected issues in the study of religion.
Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 91. Aspects of Asian Religions. 4 Units.
A survey course of a specific Asian religious tradition such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, or Shinto in its manifestation in Asia or in its transmission to the Americas.
Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 100. Topics in the Study of Religion. 4 Units.
The intersection of religious belief and practices with selected subjects of continuing interest.
Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 103. Topics in the Philosophy of Religion. 4 Units.
Critical examination of philosophical concepts in religious scripture and theology, e.g., the nature and existence of God, miracles, the problem of evil, divine command theories in ethics. May include both Eastern and Western religious traditions.
Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 106. Topics in Gender and Religion. 4 Units.
Critical examination of how religious beliefs and practices have shaped (and been shaped by) attitudes toward gender and sexuality in modern and/or premodern society.
Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 110. Thinking about Religion: Theories and Methodologies. 4 Units.
A survey and investigation of the major thinkers, theories, and methodologies in the study of religions. Designed to develop the student's ability to analyze and articulate theoretical arguments; includes a paper on relevant Religious Studies topics.
Prerequisite: REL STD 5A and REL STD 5B and REL STD 5C.
Restriction: Religious Studies Majors only.

REL STD 112B. Science and Religion II. 4 Units.
The development of genomics, stem-cell research, robotics, nanotechnology, neuropharmacology raises difficult religious and philosophical questions. Examines interdisciplinary approaches that cut across institutional boundaries, cultural borders, religious traditions. Focuses on relationship between religion and cognitive/affective/social neuroscience. Course may be offered online.
Same as SOC SCI 130B, PSYCH 172S, LPS 140B.

REL STD 115. Religion and World Politics. 4 Units.
Examines the relationship between religion and world politics historically and today, focusing on connections with peace/war, democracy, human rights, secularism(s), and globalization. Covers major debates, scholarship, concepts, and theories through class exercises, exams, and essays.
Prerequisite: POL SCI 41A or INTL ST 11 or INTL ST 12 or REL STD 5A or REL STD 5B or REL STD 5C.
Same as POL SCI 146B, INTL ST 151B.

REL STD 120. Asian Religious Traditions. 4 Units.
Studies involving (but not limited to) Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto and Shamanism, including both elite and doctrinal aspects and forms of more popular religiosity.
Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 130. Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern Religious Traditions. 4 Units.
Character and evolution of Egyptian, Jewish, Zoroastrian, Muslim, and other religious communities of the region from their formative periods to the present era.
Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.
REL STD 131A. History of Zoroastrianism. 4 Units.
Reviews major trends in the history of Zoroastrianism.

Same as HISTORY 131A.

REL STD 140. Early Western Religious Traditions. 4 Units.
Religious perspectives of the Mediterranean and European regions from the earliest times to approximately 1500 C.E.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 141. Recent Western Religious Traditions. 4 Units.
Studies related to Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christianity as well as alternative belief systems in Europe of the early modern and modern eras.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 150. Religion in the Americas. 4 Units.
Religious belief and social context in North and South America from the earliest human societies to the present.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 160. Diaspora Religions. 4 Units.
Examination of what happens to belief and practice as religious communities are scattered geographically.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 170. Comparative Studies in Religion. 4 Units.
Systematic comparisons of different religious and quasi-religious traditions, their beliefs and practices.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

REL STD 190. Senior Colloquium. 4 Units.
Reading and group discussion of selected texts under the direction of an instructor. Paper required.

Repeatability: May be taken for credit 3 times as topics vary.

Restriction: A minimum of two students must enroll.

REL STD 199. Independent Study. 1-4 Units.
Directed reading and research in consultation with a faculty member. Substantial written work required.

Repeatability: Unlimited as topics vary.

Restriction: Upper-division students only.