RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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The Department offers two tracks for majors in Religious Studies and one track for minors in Religious Studies.

The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery every day. Never lose a holy curiosity.

--Albert Einstein

Program Description
By asking the great questions of human existence, religion has influenced art and culture, philosophy and psychology, and social and political theory in profound ways, and its study offers rich opportunities for intellectual growth. Cross-cultural in content and multi-disciplinary in approach, Religious Studies investigates a wide variety of spiritual practices and religious traditions. We employ a broad palette of interpretive tools to assess religious values, beliefs, and practices. As a result, students in Religious Studies receive a generous and diverse training in the skills and methods of scholarship.

Religious Studies examines religion from outside the framework of any particular belief system. The Religious Studies faculty encourages students to explore critically with rigor and enthusiasm the beliefs and assumptions of the world they inhabit. The program engages students in a perennial conversation with the unanswerable questions, vital ideas, and struggle for meaning exemplified by human religiousness so as to encourage intellectual curiosity, increase insight, and create responsible citizens. Such studies contribute to the quality of work and life, and offer an academic training in critical thinking and writing greatly desirable for success in a variety of professions.

Requirements for the Bachelor of Arts Degree with a Major in Religious Studies

Total Units Required to Graduate 180 units
Major Requirements
Religious Studies Track 61 units
2 Foundation Courses 10
RS 290 5
RS Major Courses 40
RS 490 6
Other University Requirements 62-92 units
CSUB 101 2
American Institutions 5-10*
Area A 5-15*
Area B 15
Area C 15
Area D 10-15*
Theme 1 5
Theme 2 0-5*
Theme 3 5
GRE 0-5*
GWAR (Exam) or Class 0-5*
* may be satisfied in major, minor or other university requirement
Additional Units 2-32 units

See http://www.csub.edu/schedules.shtml for current list of courses satisfying university-wide requirements.

See the Religious Studies website for the list of courses currently in rotation: http://www.csub.edu/philosophyrs/

Major Requirements
I. Religious Studies Track
This track is for students concentrating in Religious Studies and requires a minimum of twelve (12) courses plus a minor, including:
A. A minimum of two (2) Foundational courses required from the following: RS 100, 110, 111
B. A minimum of three (3) courses required from World Religious Traditions.
One (1) course required from: RS 301, 302, 303, 310, 313, 316
One (1) course required from: RS 320, 321, 323, 326, 333, 336
One (1) additional course elective from Area B.
C. A minimum of two (2) courses required from Approaches to the Study of Religion: PHIL 342, RS 345/PSYC 345, RS 348/SOC 348, RS 349/ANTH 349, RS 353, 360, RS 363/PHIL 363
D. A minimum of two (2) courses required from Religion and Culture in Global Perspective: RS 364, 370, 371, 376, 378, 379, 410, 465
E. Sophomore Seminar: RS 290 (Completion required by end of Junior year).
F. Capstone: RS 490
G. A minimum of one (1) additional upper-division course.
H. Minor Requirement: There are three options selected from one of the following three:
1. A minor consisting of at least 20 quarter units designed by another discipline.

See the Religious Studies website for the list of courses currently in rotation: http://www.csub.edu/philosophyrs/
2. An interdisciplinary concentration or minor in one of the specially developed areas (see "Interdisciplinary Concentrations and Minors").
3. A special minor.

II. Religious Studies Double Major Track
A minimum of eight (8) courses.
A. A minimum of two (2) Foundational courses required from the following: RS 100, 110, 111
B. A minimum of two (2) courses required from World Religious Traditions. One (1) course required from: RS 301, 302, 303, 310, 313, 316
   One (1) course required from: RS 320, 321, 323, 326, 333, 336
C. A minimum of one (1) of the following courses required from Approaches to the Study of Religion: PHIL 342, RS 345/PSYC 345, RS 348/SOC 348, RS 349/ANTH 349, RS 353, 360, RS 363/PHIL 363
D. A minimum of one (1) of the following courses required from Religion and Culture in Global Perspective: RS 364, 370, 371, 376, 378, 379, 410, 465
E. Sophomore Seminar: RS 290 Theory and Method in Religious Studies (Completion required by end of Junior year)
F. Capstone: RS 490 Senior Seminar

Other University Requirements 77-92 units
CSUB 101 2
American Institutions 10
Area A 15
Area B 15
Area C 10*
Area D 15
Theme 1 5
Theme 2 5*
Theme 3 5
GRE 5*
GWAR (Exam) or Class 5
* RS classes may fulfill this requirement

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Lower Division

RS 100 Introduction to Western Religions (5)
This course examines the role that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have played in shaping the values and worldviews of Western civilization. The interaction between religion and various aspects of culture such as art, literature, politics, and society may be included. GE C5

RS 111 Introduction to Asian Religions (5)
A comparative study of the origins and development of selected religious traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and Shinto with a focus on worldview and values. The interaction between religion and various aspects of culture such as art, literature, politics, and society may be included. GE C5

RS 110 Introduction to Western Religions (5)
This course examines the role that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have played in shaping the values and worldviews of Western civilization. The interaction between religion and various aspects of culture such as art, literature, politics, and society may be included. GE C5

RS 289 Experiential Prior Learning (variable units)
Evaluation and assessment of learning that has occurred as a result of prior off-campus experience relevant to the curriculum of the department. Requires complementary academic study and/or documentation. Available by petition only, on a credit, no-credit basis. Not open to postgraduate students. Interested students should contact the department office. May not be counted toward major or minor requirements.

RS 290 Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion (5)
Drawing upon scholars working in the fields of psychology, sociology, anthropology, art, literature and the history and philosophy of religion, we will examine the contributions of these diverse fields to the interdisciplinary study of religion. How do these writers conceive of religion? How do they explain the persistence of religion throughout human history and across different cultures? How should today’s student interpret and employ these different approaches to religious studies?

RS 296/396 Human Corps Community Service I (variable units)
This course provides students a volunteer community service experience working with nonprofit, governmental, educational or community-based service organizations. Offered on a credit, no-credit basis only.
Upper Division

**Note:** All upper division courses in Religious Studies carry as a prerequisite ENGL 110 (with a minimum grade of 'C') or its equivalent. Some courses may carry additional prerequisites. Any prerequisite may be waived with the consent of the instructor. Refer to www.csub/~tvivian/schedules of upcoming courses.

**RS 301 Hebrew Bible/Christian Old Testament (5)**
A study of the Hebrew Bible in English translation with special attention given to the historical development of the religion and literature of ancient Israel. Literary forms examined include historical narrative, poetry, law, prophecy, apocalyptic, and the Hebrew wisdom tradition.

**RS 302 New Testament (5)**
The history, literature, and religion of early Christianity considered within the context of the Greco-Roman world. Texts include the gospels and epistles of the New Testament, and non-canonical writings.

**RS 303 Qur'an (Koran) (5)**
A study of the Qur'an (Koran) in English translation with special attention given to text and context: (1) the religious, historical, social, and political development of early Islam, and (2) historical-critical and literary study of the text.

**RS 304 Greek 1 - Grammar (2)**
Introduces students to the basics of New Testament Greek grammar, pronunciation, and reading. Prerequisite: English 110 or their equivalents. Greek 1, 2, and 3 do not count toward Religious Studies degree requirements.

**RS 305 Greek 2 - Grammar and Reading (2)**
A continuation of Greek 1, the course provides a basic understanding of New Testament Greek grammar, vocabulary, and syntax with the purpose of allowing students to read the New Testament in its original language. Prerequisite: satisfactory completion of Greek 1 or its equivalent. Greek 1, 2, and 3 do not count toward Religious Studies degree requirements.

**RS 306 Greek 3 - Reading (2)**
A continuation of Greek 2 with a primary focus on reading New Testament texts with instruction in applied grammar. Prerequisites: satisfactory completion of Greek 1 and 2 or their equivalents. Greek 1, 2, and 3 do not count toward Religious Studies degree requirements.

**RS 310 Judaism (5)**
A study of the multiple histories, texts, and practices that shape and sustain Jewish civilization with particular attention to the classical rabbinic tradition and post-Enlightenment expressions of Jewish identity. Students will learn about central theological concepts, the cycle of Jewish holy days, and life cycle events. Visits to local congregations will be included.

**RS 313 Christianity (5)**
A study of the history and literature of the Christian religion from its beginnings as a Jewish sect in Judea to its transformation into a global tradition with Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant branches. Some attention will be given to the development of sectarian and heretical movements. Visits to local congregations will be included.

**GE T2**

**RS 316 Islam (5)**
A study of the history, literature, religion, governments, and culture of Islamic civilization from its beginnings in the Arabian desert to its spread throughout Asia, Africa, and the Western world. Attention will be given to tensions between traditional Islamic culture and modern Western society. Visits to local congregations will be included.

**GE T2**

**RS 320 India (5)**
A study of India's culture, especially religious, mythical, and artistic expressions; the values and living patterns of citizens; the historical events leading up to independence from Great Britain; and the social, economic and spiritual effects of independence.

**GE T2**

**RS 321 Introduction to Buddhism**
A study of the historical and thematic expression of Buddhist beliefs and practices from the time of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, to the present. Students will learn about diverse expressions of the Dharma; the ways Buddhism has adapted and developed in diverse cultural environments; and resources offered by Buddhism to western modernity.

**RS 322 China and Japan (5)**
A study of China and Japan with emphasis on religious, philosophical, and artistic expressions. Attitudes towards family, community, and state will be considered.

**GE T2**

**RS 326 Native American Religion (5)**
This course will study the rich and diverse religious life of Native Americans from the remote past to the present with primary focus on North American cultures. Issues relevant to gender, ritual practice, moral values, sacred stories and world views will be examined. Native and non-native sources will be studied.
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RS 336 Religion in Modern America (5)
This course studies themes and controversies in religion in American culture since the 1950's. Students will focus upon the changing religious landscape of America as it relates to individual versus institutional religion; the civil rights movement; the peace movement of the Sixties; feminism and religion; issues of church and state; religion and politics, particularly the role of Fundamentalism in public life; religious pluralism; and religious terrorism and responses to 9/11. GE T2

PHIL 342 Philosophy of Religion (5)
An examination of the following issues: the nature of religion and religious experience, various conceptions of God, evidence for the existence of God including the classical arguments, faith and its relationship to knowledge, the problem of evil, the meaning and the logical status of religious language, the possibility and nature of personal immortality. Carries credit in either Religious Studies or Philosophy. GE T2

RS 345 Psychology of Religion (5)
This course is a survey of psychological perspectives on religious experience. Students will be introduced to theoretical, empirical, and existential approaches to the intersections of religion, spirituality, and psychology. Topics may include: development through the lifespan, conversion, meditation, health and well-being, and mysticism. Carries credit in either Psychology or Religious Studies.

RS 348/SOC 348 Sociology of Religion (5)
A study of the social dimensions of religion in comparative perspective. Topics may include: sociological theories of religion, including those of Durkheim and Weber; religion and social change; the social aspects of religious experience; and religious institutionalization with particular attention to the function of religion in contemporary secular societies. Prerequisite: ENGL 110 or equivalent with a C or better or consent of instructor.

RS 349 Anthropology of Religion (5)
Theoretical study of religious ritual emphasizing comparative study from selected non-Western societies. Particular emphasis will be given to exploring the application of various theoretical approaches to the study of ritual and shamanism.

RS 353 Myth and Ritual (5)
An exploration of the nature, function, and types of myth and ritual in comparative religions. The course investigates topics such as myth and truth, literal vs. symbolic modes of comprehension and expression, rites of passage, and current developments in ritual studies.

RS 360 Women, Religion, and Sexuality (5)
In this course we will investigate the various ways major religious traditions, Western and Asian, represent and legislate women and sexuality in their literatures and institutions in diverse historical contexts. Using a range of methodologies, with particular emphasis on feminist critique, we will also examine the nature of women's participation and leadership in these traditions as well as religious choices made by "post" Jewish and Christian feminists. GRE

RS 363/PHIL363 Philosophy, Religion and Literature (5)
This course examines philosophical and religious concepts discussed in novels, short stories, poetry, and dramatic literature that are intricately related to human nature. Such concepts include: self and self-realization, knowledge, morality, God, good and evil, afterlife, meaninglessness, friendship, love, and eros. A critical exploration of issues. Authors from various historical periods, cultures, and backgrounds will be included. This course carries credit in PHIL or RS. Prerequisites: ENGL 110 and a "C" or better in PHIL 102 or equivalents. GE T2

RS 364 Religion and Film: Screening the Sacred
This course offers students the opportunity to study how religion is represented in the genre of film. Working at the intersection of cultural studies and religious studies, we will examine how films use, modify, or allude to religious themes and values. Students will explore techniques that filmmakers employ to shape viewers’ responses to religious subjects and will examine the methods involved in the analysis of film as related to religion and questions of faith.

RS 370 Spirituality and Mysticism (5)
A study of spirituality and mysticism in comparative perspective. Topics include meditation and prayer; spiritual art and music; nature mysticism; and the relationship between spirituality and organized religion.

RS 371 Spiritual Autobiography (5)
This course introduces students to the lives of persons who attain spiritual insight that transforms self and world. Guiding concerns include self-representation in language and narrative; the role of gender in autobiographical writing; and the relationship between self-knowledge and knowledge of God/ultimate reality.
RS 377 Special Studies in Religion (1-5)
Topics to be offered will be announced prior to registration. May be repeated for different course content.

RS 378 The Holocaust and Its Impact (5)
A critical consideration of the moral and religious implications of Nazi Germany’s destruction of European Jewry. The course examines religious, historical, and social forces, ideas and events leading up to the Holocaust; the role of the churches in Nazi Germany; and the moral and spiritual values and beliefs of individuals who acted as perpetrators, victims, bystanders, resistance fighters, and/or rescuers. The course considers the influence of the Holocaust on postwar thought and culture, particularly religious belief and political developments. GE T2

RS 379 Religion, Conflict, and Peacemaking (5)
An investigation of the various ways religious ideas and traditions have motivated and expressed violence. Cases studied may include Gandhian non-violence in India; religion and racism in South Africa and the United States; anti-Semitism; religious violence against women; and religious terrorism. Of primary concern is to investigate the values and ideas available within religious thought and belief for resolving religious violence and creating peace.

RS 410 Religion, Ethics and Human Sexuality (5)
A study of the intersection of human sexuality and religious ethics. The course includes an introduction to tradition-based ethics in Judaism, Christianity and Islam and then focuses on how these traditions are engaged by contemporary feminist and womanist ethicists. Readings focus on questions about human sexuality, including gender roles and sexual orientation. GRE

RS 465 The Meaning of Death (5)
A study of the meaning of death in the major religious traditions of the world. Topics may include the stages of grief, physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia, deathbed visions and the near-death experience, and problems of aging, and afterlife theories. GE T2

RS 477 Special Studies in Religion (1-5)
Topics to be offered will be announced prior to registration. May be repeated for different course content. Not open to postgraduate students. Interested students should contact the department office. May not be counted toward major or minor requirements.

RS 490 Senior Seminar (6)
Seniors in the major or minor will carry out extended research and write a final essay that serves as the culmination of their study for the degree.

RS 496 Internship in Applied Religious Studies (1-5)
Supervised field experience in applying religious studies skills in dealing with individuals and in community organizations and institutions. Career-oriented experience in community setting is combined with academic activities in the college setting. Hours in the field, placement and academic requirements such as conferences, reports, and readings are arranged in consultation with the work supervisor and faculty supervisor. Prerequisites vary depending on the specific internship, but enrollment is limited to students with good academic records who are committed to understanding the religious elements present in professional life.

RS/PHIL 498 Directed Study in the Instruction of Philosophy/Religious Studies (1-5)
Theory and method in undergraduate instruction in Philosophy/Religious Studies. Weekly meetings with faculty sponsor and supervised experience which may include developing and administering examinations or paper assignments, proctoring self-paced instructional units, course development, evaluation of student papers, lectures, leading class discussion and discussion groups, and in-depth directed readings of relevant topics. The course is repeatable and will be offered on a credit, nocredit basis only. Prerequisites: Senior (or graduate) standing; a grade of B or better in PHIL/RS 290; and consent of the instructor.

RS 499 Individual Study (1-5)
Individual program with regular consultations and/or examinations as instructor may require. Admission with consent of department chair.

RS 577 Special Studies in Religion (1-5)
Topics to be offered will be announced. May be repeated for different course content. Requires graduate level standing.

RS 580 Advanced Research Participation (1-5)
Individual investigation under the supervision of an identified instructor. (Experience as a research or teaching assistant does not count for credit.) Prerequisite: 3.0 GPA and consent of department chair.

RS 599 Advanced Individual Study (1-5)
Special projects developed by the individual in consultation with an identified instructor. Prerequisite: 3.0 GPA and consent of department chair.

RS 677 Special Studies in Religion (1-5)
Topics to be offered will be announced. May be repeated for different course content. Requires graduate level standing.