

# BA in Religious Studies Curriculum

21 credits of upper-division (300-400 level) course work are required for the BA

## Foundations of religious studies (6 credits)

REL 115 Living Religions of the World  
REL 130 The Study of Religion

## Scriptures and traditions (6 units)

*Judeo-Christian-Islamic traditions (one of the following)*

REL 200 Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures  
REL 201 Introduction to the New Testament  
REL 202 Introduction to Islam  
REL 204 Mesopotamian Myths and Rituals  
REL 213 Introduction to Judaism  
REL 214 Introduction to Christianity  
REL 303 Readings of Qur'an and Hadith  
REL 315 Archaeology of Ancient Israel  
REL 316 Genesis and Gender  
REL 323 Interpretation of Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)  
REL 324 Interpretation of the New Testament  
REL 340 The Bible as Literature: The Hebrew Scriptures  
REL 341 The Bible as Literature: The Christian Scriptures

*Asian traditions (one of the following)*

REL 335 Hinduism and the Religions of India  
REL 336 Buddhism

## Philosophy of religion and theology (3 credits)

*(one of the following)*

REL 125 Philosophy of Religion  
REL 217 The Holocaust and Religious Faith  
REL 309 Religion, Knowledge, and Evil  
REL 310 From Socrates to Aquinas

REL 311 Descartes to Kierkegaard

REL 319 Images of Jesus

REL 322 Topics in Theology

REL 322a Philosophical Theology

## Religion, ethics, and society (6 credits)

*(two of the following)*

REL 120 Global Ethics and Religion  
REL 240 Interfaith Leadership, Understanding & Engagement  
REL 307 Germany and the Holocaust  
REL 312 Religious Experience in Film and Fiction  
REL 314 Fiction, Film, and the Catholic Contemplative Tradition  
REL 325 Albert Schweitzer: His Life and Thought  
REL 330 Women and Religion  
REL 333 Religion and Gender in Harry Potter  
REL 334 Religion and Love in World Literature  
REL 350 Happiness: Exploring Its Spiritual and Rational Foundations  
REL 351 Health, Healing and Wholeness in the World Religions  
REL 353 Religion and Medicine  
REL 355 New Religious Movements in the Global Context  
REL 365 Topics in the Holocaust  
REL 365a Perpetrators, Witness, and Rescuers  
REL 380 Law and Religion  
REL 490 Independent Internship

## Area of study (9 credits)

*Three courses in an area of interest, to be chosen in discussion with a departmental advisor*

## Required courses (6 credits)

REL 398 Junior-Senior Seminar  
REL 498 Senior Capstone Project

**TOTAL credits 36**

Please visit or contact us at:

Web: [chapman.edu/wilkinson/religious-studies](http://chapman.edu/wilkinson/religious-studies)

Phone: 714-997-6636

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## Religious Studies

"For there to be true peaceful co-existence in the world, harmony among the world's major religions is indispensable... [U]nderstanding among the faith traditions is no longer a matter that concerns religious believers alone. It affects the welfare of everyone on the planet."

*-His Holiness, the Dalai Lama*

The Religious Studies Department at Chapman University offers courses that are global in scope and interdisciplinary in approach, covering a broad range of religious traditions and focusing on twenty-first century issues of ethics and identity. Courses explore not only diverse understandings of the nature of reality and the self but also the meaning of life and death, the relationship of spirituality, reason, and science, and religious dimensions of local and global challenges like social justice, violence, the environmental crisis, wholeness and health, economic sustainability and much more.

Emphasizing critical thinking and analytic skills, the Religious Studies major is excellent preparation for graduate studies in a variety of fields, with majors embarking on careers from teaching, research, and ministry, to medicine, psychology, law, journalism, business, and government and NGO service. Wherever the future may lead, interreligious literacy will be an essential competency, enhancing understanding of contemporary politics, history, art and culture and providing an invaluable asset for serving clients, patients, students, customers or constituents.

▼ *Reclining Buddha, Wat Pho, Bangkok, Thailand*



▼ *Hindu Holy Man in Udaipur, India*



▼ *Michelangelo's Pietà, St. Peter's Basilica*



# Integrated

## Curriculum

Students in the Religious Studies major begin their course of study with shared foundational courses introducing them to the study of religious phenomena, ideas, practices and texts and to the broad range of the world's religious traditions, from Judaism, Christianity and Islam to Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Taoism and indigenous religions. Sophomores and Juniors branch out to take courses in the areas of Scriptures and Traditions, Philosophy and Theology, and Religion, Ethics and Society as well as a selected area of concentration. Students then come together again as Juniors and/or Seniors for an intensive seminar exclusively for Religious Studies majors and minors, and the program culminates in a research project, integrating each student's individualized course of study.

## Study with Visiting Scholars

Religious Studies majors and minors also have the opportunity to meet and study with eminent visiting scholars from around the world through the department's Francis and Huntington Lectureships and the Visiting Griset Chair in Bible and Christian Tradition.

▼ *Street Mural in Capetown, South Africa*



## Student Honor Society

Qualified students can join the campus chapter of the National Honor Society for Religious Studies and Theology, Theta Alpha Kappa. Members also organize extracurricular programming on campus to foster interreligious literacy and interfaith dialogue, from holiday celebrations to lectures, films and group discussions.

# Interdisciplinary

## Toolbox Methodology

Because religion intersects with so many dimensions of human life, the religious studies major introduces students to theories and methods across a wide range of diverse fields from textual studies & archaeology, philosophy, history, political science & sociology, psychology & anthropology, economics & law, literary theory & art history, and more, to analyze religious phenomena, ideas, practices and texts.

## Across Campus

Students can also take courses on religion offered in departments such as history, sociology, political science and economics, while many other courses in world literature, art history, psychology and anthropology, physics and more also address religious issues. The campus has an ongoing dialogue on quantum theory, philosophy and religion and additional lectures and programming are provided by the Fish Interfaith Center; the Institute for the Study of Religion, Economics and Society; the Schweitzer Institute; and the Rodgers Center for Holocaust Studies.

▼ *Caroline Kutschbach, Religious Studies Major, 2019*



# Individual

## Course of Study

Students work closely with a faculty mentor to develop a course of study tailored to their individual interests and personal and professional goals. The requirements for the major are flexible with a wide array of courses from which to choose, and students develop an individualized area of focus for their electives, culminating in a senior capstone project. The major requirements have also been streamlined to facilitate double-majoring in related fields like political science, sociology, peace studies, psychology, art history, literature or film.

## Independent Study Opportunities

Upper division students working on their capstone projects or who want to pursue more advanced study in a topic or tradition beyond regular course offerings or to read primary texts in an original language also have the opportunity to study with Religious Studies faculty on an individual basis.

▼ *Hagia Sophia, Istanbul, Turkey*



▼ *Prof. Marilyn Harran delivering the 4th Annual Lectio Magistralis*



# International

## Global Studies

Departmental courses offer students the opportunity to study gender and religion in Harry Potter in London, archeology in Israel, and India's diverse religious heritage in Asia. Majors are also encouraged to participate in Semester at Sea and other study programs around the globe in order to enrich their education by experiencing living religions and the people who practice them in diverse cultural contexts. For further information on study abroad opportunities, including a list of programs that offer Religious Studies courses, please visit: <http://studyabroad.chapman.edu>

## Global Study of Religion

Courses in Religious Studies cover the global range of religious traditions from Judaism, Christianity & Islam to Buddhism, Taoism & Confucianism; Hinduism, Jainism & Sikhism; and indigenous religions, examining the intersections of ethics, law, gender, health and politics with religions around the world.

## Faculty Expertise

Religious Studies faculty are engaged in international research in their fields and bring this expertise into the classroom.

Prof. Marilyn Harran:

The Holocaust in Germany

Prof. Nancy Martin:

Devotional Hinduism in India

Prof. Rafael Luevano:

Christian Theology in Mexico

Prof. Julye Bidmead:

Archaeology in Israel

▼ *Prof. Martin, Prof. Meyer, Prof. Bidmead, and Prof. Luevano.*

