

RELIGIOUS STUDIES MAJOR, B.A.

Contact Information

Department of Religious Studies

<http://religion.unc.edu>

125 Carolina Hall, CB# 3225

(919) 962-1567

Randall Styers, Chair

Jessica Boon, Interim Director of Undergraduate Studies

jboon@email.unc.edu

Myra Quick, Department Registrar

quick@email.unc.edu

The Department of Religious Studies is dedicated to the study of religions as historical and cultural phenomena. It examines the history, texts, artifacts, beliefs, values, and rituals of a variety of religious traditions, including Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Inherently interdisciplinary in its approach, religious studies explores religions in light of related fields in the humanities and social sciences such as anthropology, classics, archaeology, sociology, philosophy, and history.

Department Programs

Majors

- Religious Studies Major, B.A. (p. 1)
- Religious Studies Major, B.A.–Jewish Studies Concentration (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/religious-studies-major-ba-jewish-studies-concentration>)

Minors

- Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/islamic-middle-eastern-studies-minor>)
- Jewish Studies Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/jewish-studies-minor>)
- Religious Studies Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/religious-studies-minor>)
- Study of Christianity and Culture Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/study-christianity-culture-minor>)

Graduate Programs

- M.A. in Religious Studies (<http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/religious-studies>)
- Ph.D. in Religious Studies (<http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/religious-studies>)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the religious studies program, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of at least three religious traditions
- Demonstrate knowledge of influential terms, approaches, and theories in religious studies

- Conduct research in religious studies, including interpreting primary sources, assessing scholarly literature, and constructing original arguments
- Clearly and effectively communicate the results of research

Requirements

In addition to the program requirements listed below, students must

- attain a final cumulative GPA of at least 2.0
- complete a minimum of 45 academic credit hours earned from UNC–Chapel Hill courses
- take at least half of their major course requirements (courses and credit hours) at UNC–Chapel Hill
- earn a minimum of 18 hours of C or better in the major core requirements (some majors require 21 hours).

For more information, please consult the degree requirements section of the catalog (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/general-education-curriculum-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext>).

Core Requirements

RELI 697	Capstone: Undergraduate Seminar	3
Two RELI courses numbered 400 or above, including courses cross-listed with other units		6
Six RELI courses, including courses cross-listed with other units		18
Total Hours		27

Of the nine courses required in the major, students must take at least one course in three of the department's five subfields listed below.

1. Ancient Mediterranean Religions (p. 1)
2. Asian Religions-Islamic Studies (p. 2)
3. Medieval and Early Modern/Historical Studies (p. 2)
4. Religion and Culture (p. 3)
5. Religion in the Americas (p. 3)

Religious Studies (RELI) course descriptions (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/departments/religious-studies/#coursestext>).

Ancient Mediterranean Religions

CLAR/JWST/ RELI 110	The Archaeology of Palestine in the New Testament Period	3
CLAR/JWST/ RELI 512	Ancient Synagogues	3
CLAR/RELI 375	Archaeology of Cult	3
FOLK/RELI 502	Myths and Epics of the Ancient Near East	3
JWST/RELI 103	Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Literature	3
JWST/RELI 106	Introduction to Early Judaism	3
JWST/RELI 206	Prophecy and Divination in Ancient Israel and Judah	3
JWST/RELI 503	Exploring the Dead Sea Scrolls	3
RELI 63	First-Year Seminar: The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls	3
RELI 65	First-Year Seminar: Myth, Philosophy, and Science in the Ancient World	3
RELI 70	First-Year Seminar: Jesus in Scholarship and Film	3
RELI 104	Introduction to the New Testament ^H	3

RELI 105	Religions of the Greco-Roman World	3
RELI 109	History and Culture of Ancient Israel ^H	3
RELI 117	Culture of the Ancient Near East	3
RELI 201	Ancient Biblical Interpretation ^H	3
RELI 207	Jesus in Myth, Tradition, and History 30-200 CE	3
RELI 208	The Birth of Christianity	3
RELI 209	Varieties of Early Christianity ^H	3
RELI 211	Classical Hebrew I: A Linguistic Introduction to the Hebrew Bible	3
RELI 212	Classical Hebrew II: A Linguistic Introduction to the Hebrew Bible	3
RELI 217	Gnosticism ^H	3
RELI 390	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3
RELI 411	Advanced Akkadian	3
RELI 412	Ugaritic	3
RELI 413	Biblical Coptic and Early Egyptian Monasticism	3
RELI 590	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3
RELI 602	What Is Scripture? Formations of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Canon	3
RELI 603	The Bible and Its Translation	3
RELI 607	Problems in Early Christian Literature and History ^H	3
RELI 608	The Messiah and the Apocalypse	3
RELI 617	Death and Afterlife in the Ancient World	3

^H Honors version available. An honors course fulfills the same requirements as the nonhonors version of that course. Enrollment and GPA restrictions may apply.

Asian Religions-Islamic Studies

ANTH/ASIA/RELI 574	Chinese World Views	3
ARAB/ASIA/RELI 681	Readings in Islamicate Literatures	3
ASIA/RELI 180	Introduction to Islamic Civilization	3
ASIA/RELI 181	Modern Muslim Societies	3
ASIA/RELI 183	Asian Religions	3
ASIA/RELI 284	The Buddhist Tradition: East Asia	3
ASIA/RELI 285	The Buddhist Tradition: Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka	3
ASIA/RELI 487	Mountains, Pilgrimage, and Sacred Places in Japan	3
ASIA/RELI 488	Shinto in Japanese History	3
ASIA/RELI 489	Animals in Japanese Religion	3
ASIA/RELI 581	Sufism	3
ASIA/RELI 582	Islam and Islamic Art in South Asia	3
ASIA/RELI 583	Religion and Culture in Iran, 1500-Present	3
ASIA/RELI 584	The Qur'an as Literature	3
ASIA 300/ RELI 283	The Buddhist Tradition: India, Nepal, and Tibet	3
ASIA 301/ RELI 286	Premodern Japanese Religions	3
ASIA 302/ RELI 287	Modern Japanese Religions	3

ASIA 303/ RELI 288	Chinese Religions	3
HNUR/RELI 592	Religious Conflict and Literature in India	3
PWAD/RELI 481	Religion, Fundamentalism, and Nationalism	3
RELI 64	First-Year Seminar: Reintroducing Islam	3
RELI 73	First-Year Seminar: From Dragons to Pokemon: Animals in Japanese Myth, Folklore, and Religion ^H	3
RELI 165	Mysticism ^H	3
RELI 184	East Asian Religions: The Religions of East Asia and the Environment	3
RELI 185	Women/Gender/Islam ^H	3
RELI 248	Introduction to American Islam ^H	3
RELI 289	Muhammad and the Qur'an	3
RELI 381	Religions of South Asia	3
RELI 385	Modern Muslims and the Qur'an	3
RELI 390	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3
RELI 480	Modern Muslim Literatures	3
RELI 485	Gender and Sexuality in Islam	3
RELI 524	Ethnographic Approaches to Contemporary Religion	3
RELI 580	African American Islam	3
RELI 585	Religion and Culture of Turkey	3
RELI 586	Women and Gender in Japanese Religions	3
RELI 590	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3

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Medieval and Early Modern/Historical Studies

ASIA/RELI 180	Introduction to Islamic Civilization	3
ASIA/RELI 284	The Buddhist Tradition: East Asia	3
ASIA/RELI 488	Shinto in Japanese History	3
ASIA/RELI 581	Sufism	3
ASIA 301/ RELI 286	Premodern Japanese Religions	3
ASIA 303/ RELI 288	Chinese Religions	3
GSLI/RELI 218	Christianity and Islam in the Middle Ages	3
HIST/RELI 454	The Reformation	3
RELI 62	First-Year Seminar: A History of Heresy: Christian Dissent from the Gnostics to the Pentecostals	3
RELI 77	First-Year Seminar: Martyrs and Warriors: Religion and the Problem of Violence	3
RELI 88	First-Year Seminar: Religion and Society in Historical Novels	3
RELI 108	Classic Jewish Texts: From Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls to Kabbalah and Hassidism	3
RELI 161	Introduction to the History of Christian Traditions ^H	3
RELI 162	Catholicism Today: An Introduction to the Contemporary Catholic Church	3
RELI 163	Critical Issues in Western Religious Thought	3
RELI 164	Heresy and Inquisition: Religion, Ethics, Marginalization	3
RELI 165	Mysticism ^H	3

RELI 166	Ideals, Cultures, and Rituals of the University ^H	3	RELI 102	World Religions	3
RELI 209	Varieties of Early Christianity ^H	3	RELI 121	Introduction to Religion and Culture ^H	3
RELI 266	Medieval and Renaissance Christian Cultures	3	RELI 122	Introduction to Philosophical Approaches to Religion ^H	3
RELI 365	Studies in Christian Theologies and Theologians	3	RELI 125	Heaven and Hell	3
RELI 366	Medieval Religious Texts	3	RELI 127	The Claims of Science and Religion	3
RELI 367	The Art of Devotion in Medieval and Early Modern Europe	3	RELI 134	Introduction to Religious Ethics ^H	3
RELI 390	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3	RELI 135	Technology, the Self, and Ethical Problems	3
RELI 450	Sexuality in Jewish Tradition and History	3	RELI 138	Religious Freedom	3
RELI 565	Medieval Jews and the Bible	3	RELI 222	Modern Western Religious Thought	3
RELI 566	Islamic and Jewish Legal Literature	3	RELI 225	Christian Cultures	3
RELI 569	Interfaith Marriages and Intimacy in World Religions	3	RELI 232	Shrines and Pilgrimages	3
RELI 586	Women and Gender in Japanese Religions	3	RELI 235	Place, Space, and Religion	3
RELI 590	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3	RELI 236	Religious Things	3
RELI 617	Death and Afterlife in the Ancient World	3	RELI 246	Supernatural Encounters: Zombies, Vampires, Demons, and the Occult in the Americas ^H	3
RELI 662	Advanced Seminar in Contemporary Catholicism	3	RELI 322	Theories of Religion ^H	3
RELI 668	Religion and the Spanish Inquisition: Abrahamic Traditions, Indigenous Religions, and Empire	3	RELI 323	Social Theory and Cultural Diversity	3
RELI/WGST 362	Mary in the Christian Tradition ^H	3	RELI 325	Religion, Magic, and Science	3
RELI/WGST 371	Women Mystics	3	RELI 338	Religion in American Law	3
RELI 665/ WGST 664	Body and Suffering in Christian Mysticism	3	RELI 390	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3

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Religion and Culture

ANTH/FOLK/RELI 428	Religion and Anthropology ^H	3
ANTH/FOLK/RELI 688	Observation and Interpretation of Religious Action	3
CMPL/GSLL 270/ JWST 239/RELI 239	German Culture and the Jewish Question	3
JWST 100/ RELI 123	Introduction to Jewish Studies	3
JWST/RELI 343	Religion in Modern Israel	3
PHIL 134/ RELI 126	Philosophy of Western Religion ^H	3
RELI 61	First-Year Seminar: Religion, Magic, and Science	3
RELI 67	First-Year Seminar: Nature, Culture, and Self-Identity: Religion in the Construction of Social Life	3
RELI 68	FYS: Charisma in Religion, Science, and Poetry Studies in the Entrepreneurial Imagination ^H	3
RELI 71	First-Year Seminar: Ethics and the Spirit of the New Capitalism	3
RELI 74	First-Year Seminar: Person, Time, and Religious Conduct ^H	3
RELI 75	First-Year Seminar: Sacrifice and Surrender	3
RELI 76	First-Year Seminar: Money and Morality: Divining Value in Social Life	3
RELI 85	First-Year Seminar: Sex, Marriage, and Family in Religion	3
RELI 101	Introduction to Religious Studies	3

RELI 102	World Religions	3	RELI 525	Seminar in Religion and Literature	3
RELI 121	Introduction to Religion and Culture ^H	3	RELI 528	Rituals and Rhetorics of Religion	3
RELI 122	Introduction to Philosophical Approaches to Religion ^H	3	RELI 530	Genealogies of Religion	3
RELI 125	Heaven and Hell	3	RELI 590	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3
RELI 127	The Claims of Science and Religion	3	RELI 234/ SOCI 140	Historical Sociology of Christianity	3
RELI 134	Introduction to Religious Ethics ^H	3	RELI/SOCI 429	Religion and Society	3
RELI 135	Technology, the Self, and Ethical Problems	3	RELI/WGST 244	Gender and Sexuality in Western Christianity ^H	3
RELI 138	Religious Freedom	3	RELI/WGST 424	Gender Theory and the Study of Religion	3
RELI 222	Modern Western Religious Thought	3			
RELI 225	Christian Cultures	3			
RELI 232	Shrines and Pilgrimages	3			
RELI 235	Place, Space, and Religion	3			
RELI 236	Religious Things	3			
RELI 246	Supernatural Encounters: Zombies, Vampires, Demons, and the Occult in the Americas ^H	3			
RELI 322	Theories of Religion ^H	3			
RELI 323	Social Theory and Cultural Diversity	3			
RELI 325	Religion, Magic, and Science	3			
RELI 338	Religion in American Law	3			
RELI 390	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3			
RELI 421	Religion and Science	3			
RELI 425	Psychology of Religion ^H	3			
RELI 438	Religion, Nature, and Environment ^H	3			
RELI 522	19th-Century Critiques of Religion	3			
RELI 524	Ethnographic Approaches to Contemporary Religion	3			

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Religion in the Americas

ANTH/FOLK/RELI 342	African-American Religious Experience	3
ASIA/RELI 445	Asian Religions in America	3
JWST/RELI 107	Introduction to Modern Judaism	3
JWST/RELI 143	Judaism in Our Time	3
JWST/RELI 243	Introduction to American Judaism	3
JWST/RELI 444	Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Judaism	3
RELI 60	First-Year Seminar: Religion and Racism	3
RELI 66	First-Year Seminar: Buddhism in America: From the Buddha to the Beastie Boys	3
RELI 69	First-Year Seminar: Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Judaism	3

RELI 72	First-Year Seminar: Apocalypse Now? Messianic Movements in America	3
RELI 140	Religion in America ^H	3
RELI 141	African American Religions ^H	3
RELI 142	Catholicism in America	3
RELI 151	Religion in Latin America	3
RELI 235	Place, Space, and Religion	3
RELI 240	Religion, Literature, and the Arts in America ^H	3
RELI 241	Messianic Movements in American History	3
RELI 242	New Religious Movements in America	3
RELI 245	Latina/o Religions in the United States-Mexico Borderlands ^H	3
RELI 246	Supernatural Encounters: Zombies, Vampires, Demons, and the Occult in the Americas ^H	3
RELI 248	Introduction to American Islam ^H	3
RELI 332	The Protestant Tradition ^H	3
RELI 338	Religion in American Law	3
RELI 340	Liberal Tradition in American Religion	3
RELI 345	Black Atlantic Religions ^H	3
RELI 390	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3
RELI 423	Ethnicity, Race, and Religion in America	3
RELI 441	Religion in Early America ^H	3
RELI 442	History of Religion in America since 1865	3
RELI 443	Evangelicalism in Contemporary America ^H	3
RELI 446	Christian-Jewish Relations throughout the Ages	3
RELI 540	Mormonism and the American Experience	3
RELI 541	Evangelicalism from a Global Perspective ^H	3
RELI 542	Religion and the Counterculture ^H	3
RELI 580	African American Islam	3
RELI 590	Topics in the Study of Religion (based on topic)	3

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Introductory and intermediate language courses (RELI 401, RELI 402, RELI 403, RELI 404, RELI 409, RELI 410) are recommended for their usefulness but do not count toward the major in religious studies.

Special Opportunities in Religious Studies

Honors in Religious Studies

Students majoring in religious studies (including double majors) with a grade point average of 3.5 or above in department courses and 3.3 grade point average overall and who will have successfully completed at least one course numbered 400 or above on a topic in religious studies that is related to the proposed thesis may choose to write an honors thesis. Candidates for graduation with honors in religious studies are to be enrolled in RELI 691H in the fall and RELI 692H in the spring semester of their senior year. RELI 691H and RELI 692H count toward the major as courses fulfilling subfield requirements. Students should submit applications for the honors program to the department's director of undergraduate studies by the end of February during their junior year. Consult the department's director of undergraduate studies for details.

Study Abroad

Professor Jodi Magness directs archaeological excavations in Israel during the summer. Students are welcome to participate. Other courses through the Study Abroad Office can count towards the major and minor in religious studies as well.

Undergraduate Awards

The department presents two awards at the end of each academic year: the Bernard Boyd Fellowship and the Bernard Boyd Memorial Prize.