

RELIGIOUS STUDIES, BA

Arts & Humanities (ah) (<https://catalog.csub.edu/general-information/csub-information/school-arts-humanities/>)

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies (<https://catalog.csub.edu/general-information/csub-information/school-arts-humanities/department-philosophy-religious-studies/>)

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Program Maps for Arts and Humanities (<https://programmmap.csub.edu/academics/interest-clusters/b25268bc-3d3d-44bd-8366-730406c8a906/>)

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 is inherently inter-disciplinary in nature; to encourage inter-disciplinary approaches to the study of religion, the program offers a special degree path for students pursuing a double major.

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. Through its association with the Institute of Religion, Education, and Public Policy (IREPP), the department offers students the opportunity to engage with major public issues of the day. The annual CSUB Philosophy and Religious Studies Undergraduate Conference provides a forum for the presentation of work by undergraduates from CSUB and other universities in all areas of philosophical and religious studies.

Religious Studies Program Learning Outcomes

Goal 1 – Students will come to understand and appreciate religion as a phenomenon that brings meaning to human lives in diverse cultures, traditions, and historical moments.

- Students will learn the major beliefs and practices that constitute diverse religious traditions.
- Students will be able to analyze and compare religious traditions.
- Students will be able to discuss how religious beliefs and practices reflect a conception of the human purpose and dilemma.

Goal 2 – Students will learn about the religious history of different geographic regions and cultures (e.g., Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe).

- Students will be able to identify the different religious traditions, ideas, and values that have emerged from diverse cultures.

Goal 3 – Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills using the methods of the academic study of religion.

- Students will learn the diverse theories and major debates among scholars in a variety of academic fields (e.g., religious studies, philosophy, psychology, and sociology) on the nature and meaning of religion.
- Students will be able to identify central definitions of the concept of religion and the debates that have informed them (e.g., what is Freud's view of religion, and how does it differ from Durkheim's position?).
- Students will be able to distinguish theology from the academic study of religion.
- Students will be able to discuss various interpretations of religion in addressing theoretical questions (e.g., what role does gender play in religious experience? What is the meaning of sacrifice?).

Goal 4 – Students will learn to read and write according to the standards and conventions of scholarship in the study of religion and will be introduced to appropriate technology for reading and research in religious studies.

- Students will acquire the necessary skills to develop an essay topic, conduct research, construct arguments, and write cogent essays in religious studies incorporating Chicago style documentation.
- Students will be able to locate and distinguish primary and secondary sources; students will be able to use appropriate collections, articles, bibliographies, and web resources; students will be able to critically appropriate these sources in order to amplify their research and writing; and students will be able to cite such sources accurately.

Program Requirements

Code	Title	Units
General Education Requirements		
	First-Year Seminar (FYS)	2
	Lower Division Area A: Foundational Skills	9
	Lower Division Area B: Natural Sciences	9
	Lower Division Area C: Arts and Humanities ¹	3-6
	Lower Division Area D: Social and Behavioral Sciences	3

Lower Division Area E: Student Enrichment and Lifelong Learning (SELF) ¹	0-3
Lower Division Area F: Ethnic Studies	3
American Institutions: Government and History	6
Junior Year Diversity & Reflection (JYDR) ¹	0-3
Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)	3
Upper Division Thematic Area B and D ¹	6
General Education Capstone ¹	0
<i>General Education Subtotal</i> ¹	44-53

Major Requirements*Required Introductory Course*

RS 2900	Exploring Religion	3
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Core Courses

Select one from each of the following areas:	12
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Area 1

RS 3210	Judaism
RS 3220	Christianity
RS 3230	Islam

Area 2

RS 3240	Hinduism
RS 3250	Buddhism

Area 3

RS 3260	Indigenous Religious Traditions of the Americas
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Area 4

RS 3270	Religion in America
RS 4410	Religion and Immigration

Select one additional course from any area above	3
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Approaches to the Study of Religion

Select one of the following:	3
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RS 3340	Psychology of Religion
RS 3350	Sociology of Religion
RS 3368	Women, Religion and Sexuality
ANTH 3350	Anthropology of Religion
RS 3360	Religion of Literature
PHIL/RS 4560	Philosophy of Religion

Religion & Culture

Select three of the following (one Lower Division, one Upper Division and one elective):	9
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Lower Division

RS 1128	A History of God
RS 1138	Religions of Asia
RS 1108	Jesus, Buddha, and the Moral Life
RS 1118	Religion and Film: Screening the Sacred
RS 2010	Cults in America
RS 2018	Anime Spirituality
RS 2108	Latinx Spiritualities

Upper Division

RS 3208	Explorations in Scripture
RS 3518	The American Dream
RS 3528	The Holocaust and Its Impact
RS 3538	Religion and Human Rights
RS 3548	The Spiritual Quest

RS 4420	Miracles, Magic, and the Supernatural	
RS 4518	The Meaning of Death	
RS 4528	Religion, Ethics, and Social Justice	
<i>Experiential</i>		
Select one of the following:	3	
RS 3480	Applied Experience	
RS 3378	Religious Diversity in California	
RS 3388	Interfaith Literacy and Leadership: Building Bridges	
<i>Senior Seminar</i>		
RS 4908	Senior Seminar	3
<i>Major Subtotal</i>		36
Additional Units Needed Towards Graduation		31-40
Total Units		111-129

¹ Area C2 may be satisfied within the major. The SELF requirement may double count with B, C, or D. JYDR may be satisfied in major, minor or other university requirement. Students are waived from UD area of their program. Capstone may be satisfied within the senior seminar.