

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The Religious Studies major (27 credits) and minor (15 credits) offer Iowa State University students the opportunity to expand their knowledge about diverse religions in the United States and the world. The major and minor allow students to design their own unique program of study by taking courses that spark their interest. Religious Studies teaches students to explore religion objectively, critically, and empathetically. It equips students to apply academic theories and methods to understand how religions shape and are shaped by history, politics, culture, society, and human psychology. As their religious literacy increases, students will develop their own ideas about the nature of religion, life's big questions, and the wide range of human ideas, practices, and motivations.

The major in Religious Studies provides both breadth and depth. The program's 2000-level courses introduce students to the academic study of religion, providing a foundation that students build on throughout their undergraduate career. In 3000-level courses, students closely investigate particular traditions, topics, or themes. Throughout their undergraduate career, students have opportunities to connect their program of study to their own professional and personal goals.

The Religious Studies program provides students skills relevant to building a career based on their interests and passions. Contrary to popular myths, employers in today's modern workplace value college graduates with liberal arts degrees. In Religious Studies, these include the "hard skills" of writing, reading, and conducting organized research. Students also gain so-called "soft skills." These include communication strategies, learning to adapt to new environments, and the capacity to work with and understand people from diverse backgrounds. The flexibility of these skills opens up a wide range of career paths. Religious Studies graduates pursue careers in non-profits, community organizations, and people-focused industries. They apply to graduate and professional schools in areas such as law, education, and ministry. A Religious Studies degree doesn't just help students *get* a job. It helps them advance and grow, both professionally and personally, well into their lives.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon graduation, students should be able to:

1. Describe religious diversity in the United States and around the world, including diversity within traditions.
2. Identify key beliefs, doctrines, practices, and expressions of multiple religions.
3. Explain how religion has shaped and been shaped by human history, culture, and society, drawing on historical, cultural, and textual analyses.

4. Distinguish between confessional and academic understandings of religion.
5. Assess data produced by and about religious communities in an objective, critical, and empathetic manner.
6. Create and convey original insights using effective reading, research, writing, and conversation skills.

Religious Studies - Undergraduate Study

Students pursuing a major in religious studies must complete a minimum of 27 credits, including the requirements below. Students may also choose to do a senior thesis under the supervision of a religious studies faculty advisor. This option may earn 3-6 credits toward the completion of the major.

Two of the following introductory survey courses of which one must be either 2050 or 2100 6

RELIB 2050 World Religions

or RELIG 210 Religion in America

RELIB 2150 Religion and Popular Culture

RELIB 2420 History of Christianity: Early to Medieval

RELIB 2430 History of Christianity: Modern

RELIB 2770 Religion and Society

Five of the following 3000+ level courses 15

RELIB 3220 The New Testament

RELIB 3250 Religion, Law, and Justice

RELIB 3280 Native American Religions

RELIB 3320 Catholicism

RELIB 3340 Africana Religions

RELIB 3360 Religion, Sex and Gender

RELIB 3390 Goddess Religions

RELIB 3400 Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion

RELIB 3480 Psychology of Religion

RELIB 3490 Cognitive Science of Religion

RELIB 3500 Philosophy of Religion

RELIB 3520 Religions of India

RELIB 3580 Islam

RELIB 3590 The Quran

RELIB 3670 Christianity in the Roman Empire

RELIB 3680 Religions of Ancient Greece and Rome

RELIB 3700 Religion and Politics

RELIB 3800 Catholic Social Thought

RELIB 3890 Exhibiting Religion

Any other RELIG 3000- or 4000-level course

Minimum of 6 credits of elective Religious Studies courses	6	Humanities Choice	3 Elective	3
Total Credits	27	Math Choice	3	
Communication Proficiency			17	16
To meet the upper-level ISU Communication requirement, Religious Studies majors choose from one of the following:	0-3			
ENGL 1500 Critical Thinking and Communication	3	Sophomore		
ENGL 2500 Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic Composition	3	Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 3020 Business Communication	3	Religion Choice 2000+ or 3000+	3 Religion Choice 3000+	3
or ENGL 309 Proposal and Report Writing		ENGL 2500	3 Natural Science Choice ¹	4
or ENGL 314 Technical Communication		Humanities Choice	3 Social Science Choice	3
or RELIG 322 The New Testament		Natural Science Choice ¹	4 Humanities Choice	3
or RELIG 325 Religion, Law, and Justice		Social Science Choice	3 Elective	2-3
or RELIG 326 Native American Religions		LAS 2030		1
or RELIG 332 Catholicism			16	16-17
or RELIG 352 Religions of India				
or RELIG 355 The Quran		Junior		
or RELIG 385 Exhibiting Religion		Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
Total Credits	6-9	Religion Choice 3000+	3 Religion Choice 3000+	3
Students in all ISU majors must complete a three-credit course in U.S. Cultures and Communities (formerly U.S. Diversity) and a three-credit course in International Perspectives. Check (http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/courses/div-ip-guide.html) for a list of approved courses. Discuss with your advisor how the two courses that you select can be applied to your graduation plan.		Elective	3 Elective	3
According to the university-wide Communication Proficiency Grade Requirement (http://catalog.iastate.edu/academics/#communicationproficiencypolicytext), students must demonstrate their communication proficiency by earning a grade of C or better in ENGL 2500.		Elective	4 Elective	3
LAS majors require a minimum of 120 credits, including a minimum of 45 credits at the 3000/4000 level . Students must also complete the LAS College requirements (http://catalog.iastate.edu/collegeofliberalartsandsciences/), including the world language requirement and career proficiency requirement.		Elective	3 Elective	3
Religious Studies, B.A.			16	15
Freshman		Senior		
Fall	Credits Spring	Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 1500	3 Religion Choice 2000+ or 3000+	Religion Choice 3000+	3 Religion Elective	3
LIB 1600	1 World Language/Elective	Religion Elective	3 Elective	3
RELIG 2050 or 2100	3 Humanities Choice	Elective	3 Elective	3
World Language/Elective	4 Social Science Choice	Elective	4 Elective	3
			13	12
¹ Laboratory science recommended.				
The program offers a minor that may be earned by completing a total of 15 credits in religious studies including either RELIG 2050 World Religions or RELIG 2100 Religion in America. Nine hours must be in courses at the 3000 level or above (no more than 3 hours of seminar and no more than 3 hours of independent study). The minor must include at least 9 credits that are not used to meet any other department, college or university requirement.				
Religious Studies - Graduate Study				
Religious studies may be one of the three areas used for the interdisciplinary graduate studies master's degree.				