



College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Why would someone decide to major in religion at a public university?

The academic study of religion (known as religious studies or comparative religion) has been an established major at many public universities since the 1960s. In the post-World War II era, it became clear to scholars that religion needed to be studied academically because of its powerful influence on the lives of so many millions of people. In fact, religion is too important not to be studied, for it affects international relations, U.S. politics and ethical controversies.

In our increasingly multi-cultural and multi-religious nation, an understanding of the religious beliefs and practices of the children we teach, the clients we advise or the people with whom we work is very important. The major includes:

Diverse and Talented Faculty - The Department of Comparative Religion faculty members have a wide range of backgrounds and training which enables the department to offer in-depth courses in Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Native American Spirituality. All have written books or scholarly articles, and several are consulted by government, the media or business leaders for their views on how religion influences society.

Availability of Faculty - Because our faculty members are student-centered and the department is small, we are able to provide in-depth advisement and frequent opportunities for faculty-student interaction.

Flexible Offerings - The department offers a wide range of courses in the late afternoon and evening that enable the working student to finish degree requirements in a timely manner.

What sorts of courses do religious studies majors take?

As the name of the department implies, we stress a comparative approach to the study of religion. Students must take some course work in all of the world's major religious traditions and must do so with an awareness of the interactions among the world's religions, e.g., how Judaism influenced Christianity or Buddhism influenced Hinduism. Besides courses in the various religions, majors take courses that examine the intersection of religion with other spheres of life, such as politics or the media, or that analyze religion from the perspective of philosophy or the social sciences.



What can I do with a degree in religion?

The religion degree offers a broad training in the liberal arts as a preparation for eventual careers in such fields as law, education, counseling and social work. Of course, it is an ideal background for graduate study in religion/religious studies for those who wish to teach at the university level. The religion major is also an excellent background for seminary studies leading to a career in the religious ministry. Even without further study, it opens up possibilities for teaching in parochial schools and church, synagogue, mosque or temple religious education programs.

What courses are required for the religious studies major?

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies consists of 36 units:

Lower-Division Requirements (9 units):

Introduction to the Study of Religion (3 units)

Choose one course from Comparative Religion 105 or 110 .

Introduction to Western Religious Traditions (3 units)

Choose one course from Comparative Religion 200, 201, 210 or 250.

Introduction to Non-Western Religious Traditions (3 units)

Choose from Comparative Religion 270T or 280.

Upper-Division Requirements (27 units):

Core Requirements (6 units)

Comparative Religion 300 AND 485T OR 486.

The Development of Western Religious Thought (6 units)

Choose two courses from:

Comparative Religion 345A, 345B, 346A, 346B, 349A, 349B, 350T, History/Comparative Religion 405, 406, 417B, 420, 421A, 421B, 425B, 466A, 466B or 483.

The Development of Non-Western Religious Thought (6 units)

Choose two courses from the following list:

Comparative Religion 347A, 347B, 354T, 370, Philosophy 350

Afro/Comparative Religion 325, 337, History/Comparative Religion 465A, 465B

The Experience of Religion (6 units)

Choose two courses from:

Comparative Religion 305, 310, 335, 358, 367, 376, 380, 397, 400, 476, 481; Comp Lit/Comparative Religion 312, Philosophy/Comparative Religion 348; or Sociology/Comparative Religion 458.

Textual Studies (3 units)

Choose one course from: Comparative Religion 330T, 331T, 401T.

What minors do you offer in the field of religious studies?

We offer three minors: religious studies, Christian studies and Jewish studies.

Religious Studies (21 units):

Lower-Division Requirements (9 units):

Introduction to the Study of Religion (3 units)

Choose one course from Comparative Religion 105 or 110.

Introduction to Western Religious Traditions (3 units)

Choose one course from Comparative Religion 200, 201, 210 or 250.

Introduction to Non-Western Religious Traditions (3 units)

Choose one course from Comparative Religion 270T or 280.

Upper-Division Requirements (12 units):

Core Requirement (3 units):

Comparative Religion 300

Elective Courses (9 units):

Any nine units of upper-division courses in comparative religion.

Christian Studies (21 units):

Required Courses (12 units):

Comparative Religion 200, 300, 345A, 345B

Elective Courses (9 units):

Choose at least six of the units from courses cross-listed with other departments.

Comparative Religion 201, 331T, 335, 343, 350T, 358, 367, 376, 380, 400, 481, 485T*, 499*. Comp Lit/Comparative Religion 312, Afro/Comparative Religion 325, History/Comparative Religion 417B, 420, 421A, 421B, 425B, 483. Sociology/Comparative Religion 458.

(*When the content pertains to the Christian tradition.)

Jewish Studies (21 units):

Required Courses (12 units):

Comparative Religion 210, 300, 346A, 346B

Elective Courses (9 units):

Choose at least six of the units from courses cross-listed from other departments.

Comp Lit/Comparative Religion 312, Comparative Religion 330T, 335, 343, 358, 376, 380, 400, 476, 481, 485T*, 499*, History/Comparative Religion 405, History 406, 415B, 467, 468, Sociology/Comparative Religion 458.

(*When the content pertains to the Jewish tradition.)

Independent Study.** (**Directed by instructor of student's choice on a peace studies topic.)

What courses will transfer from my community college?

Many of your courses will transfer as general education classes. In addition, any community college course that is the equivalent of one of Cal State Fullerton's required religion courses is transferable. Consult your college's articulation document and the university catalog for specifics.

What student activities can I join?

The Comparative Religion Student Association sponsors both academic and social programs related to the study of religion.

Who advises me?

Religious studies majors can obtain advisement from the undergraduate advisers: Dr. James Santucci at (714) 278-3727 or e-mail: jsantucci@fullerton.edu, Dr. Paul Levesque at (714) 278-5902 or e-mail at plevesque@fullerton.edu, and the department chair, Dr. Benjamin J. Hubbard, at (714) 278-3452 or e-mail: bhubbard@fullerton.edu.

How do I get more information?

For more information, the Department of Comparative Religion's website at: <http://hss.fullerton.edu/comparative> offers an introduction to faculty members and course descriptions.

You are invited to visit the Department of Comparative Religion in Education-Classroom Building 622 or call (714) 278-2442. You may write us at Department of Comparative Religion, Education-Classroom 622, California State University, Fullerton, P.O. Box 6868, Fullerton, California 92834-6868.