Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of General Studies in Religious Studies

The undergraduate degree in the Department of Religious Studies is a research, analysis, and writing intensive program that features close work with faculty in small classroom settings. It seeks to develop a foundational knowledge of the world’s diversity of religious cultures and critical awareness of the ways in which religion shapes how we see and act toward ourselves, others, and the environment around us. Through the study of specific religious traditions and settings, students come away with a background that is invaluable to understanding and working with people of other cultures, whether in international business or simply as an informed global citizen.

Career Opportunities

Religious studies majors and minors develop expertise and skills that serve them well wherever life takes them. Our graduates have been successful in many different areas. Studying religion provides a solid foundation for work in fields as diverse as journalism, law, politics, nongovernmental organizations, ministry, and education. No matter what their intended careers, students benefit from the critical reading, writing, and analytical skills that the academic study of religion instills.

Undergraduate Admission

Admission to KU

All students applying for admission must send high school and college transcripts to the Office of Admissions. Unless they are college transfer students with at least 24 hours of credit, prospective students must send ACT or SAT scores to the Office of Admissions. Prospective first-year students should be aware that KU has qualified admission requirements that all new first-year students must meet to be admitted. Consult the Office of Admissions (http://admissions.ku.edu) for application deadlines and specific admission requirements.

Visit the International Support Services (http://www.iss.ku.edu) for information about international admissions.

Students considering transferring to KU may see how their college-level course work will transfer on the Office of Admissions (http://credittransfer.ku.edu) website.

Admission to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Admission to the College is a different process from admission to a major field. Some CLAS departments have admission requirements. See individual department/program sections for departmental admission requirements.

Admission to the Major

There are no departmental prerequisites for admission to the major. However, once the major is declared, careful attention should be paid to the requirements of the major itself.

Religious Studies Program

The Religious Studies major consists of required courses, distribution requirements, and electives. The required introductory course and capstone seminar focus on theoretical and methodological issues in the study of religion. Distribution requirements encourage students to approach the study of religion from a variety of angles, from a focus on individual religions to the interaction between religions in specific regions to the exploration of comparative issues and themes. Electives allow students to tailor their course of study to their specific interests and pursue a depth of knowledge in particular aspects of the study of religion.

Requirements for the B.A. or B.G.S. Major

The major consists of at least 27 hours in religious studies. 15 hours must be in courses numbered 300 and above, and 8 of these junior/senior hours must be completed in residence at KU. The 27 hours may include no more than 12 transfer hours, no more than 12 hours from study abroad, and no more than 15 hours in combination of the two.

Religious Studies Major Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REL 104</td>
<td>Introduction to Religious Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 105</td>
<td>Introduction to Religious Studies, Honors</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 107</td>
<td>Jews, Christians, Muslims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 109</td>
<td>Jews, Christians, Muslims, Honors</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 124</td>
<td>Understanding the Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 125</td>
<td>Understanding the Bible, Honors</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 311</td>
<td>Religion of Ancient Israel</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 325</td>
<td>Introduction to Judaism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 330</td>
<td>Native American Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 331</td>
<td>Native American Religions, Honors</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 345</td>
<td>Christianity</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 350</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 360</td>
<td>The Buddhist Tradition in Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 365</td>
<td>Hinduism</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 515</td>
<td>Studies in Early Christian Literature and History</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 523</td>
<td>The Dead Sea Scrolls</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 524</td>
<td>Ancient Egyptian Culture and Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 525</td>
<td>Jews and Christians</td>
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<td>REL 530</td>
<td>Christian Origins: from the Beginnings to Augustine</td>
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<tr>
<td>REL 543</td>
<td>Hindu Epics, Past and Present</td>
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</table>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REL 557</td>
<td>Modern Islamic Reform Movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 560</td>
<td>Modern Jewish Thought</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Religion in Specific Regions**

Satisfied by 1 course (3 hours) chosen from the following:

- REL 106  Asian Religions
- REL 108  Asian Religions, Honors
- REL 171  Religion in American Society
- REL 172  Religion in American Society, Honors
- REL 339  History of Religion in America
- REL 507  Religion in India
- REL 508  Religion in China
- REL 509  Religion in Japan
- REL 510  Religion in Korea
- REL 541  Gods and Goddesses of South Asia
- REL 555  Buddhists and Buddhism in China
- REL 571  Religion in Kansas
- REL 585  New Religious Movements (Western)
- REL 586  New Religious Movements (Nonwestern)

**Thematic Approaches to Religion**

Satisfied by 1 course (3 hours) chosen from the following:

- REL 327  Religious Zionisms
- REL 341  Mysticism
- REL 357  Women and Gender in Islam
- REL 371  Religion and Society in Tension
- REL 373  The Supreme Court and Religious Issues in the United States
- REL 374  Religious Perspectives on Selfhood and Sexuality
- REL 375  The Supreme Court and Religious Issues in the United States, Honors
- REL 377  Religious Ethics and Moral Decisions
- REL 378  Religion and Moral Decisions, Honors
- REL 406  Reading Asian Religious Classics
- REL 425  Religion and Film
- REL 464  Visions in Art and Literature
- REL 477  Gender and Religion
- REL 534  Studies in Ritual: _____
- REL 545  Yoga in Theory, Practice, and History
- REL 572  Judaism and Political Theology
- REL 573  Judaism and Sexuality

**Religious Studies Required Electives**

Satisfied by 3 courses (9 hours) within, or cross-listed with, the Religious Studies Department course offerings.

**Capstone Experience**

Satisfied by:

- REL 490  Senior Seminar in Theories and Methods

**Religious Studies Major Hours & Major GPA**

While completing all required courses (above), majors must also meet each of the following hour and grade-point average minimum standards:

**Major Hours**

Satisfied by 27 hours of major courses.

**Major Hours in Residence**

Satisfied by a minimum of 15 hours of KU resident credit in the major, of which 9 must be at the junior/senior level (300+).

**Major Junior/Senior (300+) Hours**

Satisfied by a minimum of 15 hours from junior/senior courses (300+) in the major.

**Major Junior/Senior Graduation GPA**

Satisfied by a minimum of a 2.0 KU GPA in junior/senior courses (300+) in the major. GPA calculations include all junior/senior courses in the field of study including F's and repeated courses. See the Semester/Cumulative GPA Calculator.

A sample 4-year plan for the BA degree in Religious Studies can be found here: Religious Studies, or by using the left-side navigation.

A sample 4-year plan for the BGS degree in Religious Studies can be found here: Religious Studies, or by using the left-side navigation.

**Departmental Honors**

To be eligible for honors in religious studies, an undergraduate student must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.25 overall and of 3.5 in the department. The student must also complete and defend an individual research project, as evidenced by completion of at least 3 hours of REL 499: Undergraduate Honors Research with a grade of B or better. Interested students should contact the Undergraduate Director for more information.