

Eastern Oregon University

Religious Studies

RELIGIOUS STUDIES MINOR

(This minor is also available online/onsite.)

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The academic study of religion is a traditional element in a liberal arts education. The Religious Studies minor at EOU has two principle aims: 1) to introduce students to some of the major religious traditions of the world and 2) to acquaint students with the main philosophical, psychological and historical methodologies employed in the study of religion.

The religious traditions of the world address fundamental and enduring human problems, questions and hopes - and offer a variety of answers. The academic study of religions brings students face-to-face with these questions in an objective and reasoned way, and looks at how religions have answered some of the critical questions facing human beings. For example: Who and what am I - and am I other than what I appear to be? What are the limits of human understanding - can humans understand ultimate things? What is a meaningful and fulfilling life? What are good and evil - and how do these concepts originate? What - if any - are my responsibilities to family, community, state and world? And perhaps most importantly for the 21st century global community, how do we deal with the claims of each religion to have "the truth" - when the "truths" appear to be different from each other?

These are some of the questions we ask in the Religious Studies program as we explore some of the main religious traditions of humanity and investigate how religions have provided a framework for people to structure and make sense of their lives and experiences.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

-Students will gain familiarity with the range of religious belief in contemporary and historical societies.

-Students will gain familiarity with the important scholarly contributions to our understanding of religion which have been forthcoming from a wide array of academic disciplines.

- Students will gain familiarity with specific religious traditions.

MEANS OF ASSESSMENT

Religious Studies minors are evaluated in a variety of ways. They complete with a grade of C- or better a curriculum of at least thirty credits that cover the major areas of contemporary religious studies. They are required to do substantial formal writing. Written work is evaluated in terms of recognized standards of formal academic writing and creative process which demonstrates clarity, mastery of substantive content, and academic insight and analysis.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

1. A minimum of 30 credits, 20 of which must be graded are required for the minor.
2. At least 15 upper-division credits are required.
3. A grade of "C-" or better for all courses applied toward the minor. Maintain a C (2.00) or better cumulative GPA in courses required for the minor.

4. A minimum of ten credits applied toward the minor must be completed at EOU.

5. Completion of the following curriculum:

Core:

REL 101 Introduction to Religion (5 credits)

PHIL 320 Philosophy of Religion (5 credits)

Electives - 20 credits from the following:

PHIL 101 Self, World, and God (5 credits)

HST 325 History of Christianity (5 credits)

HST 421 Medieval Europe (5 credits)

ANTH/SOC 442 Religion and Violence (5 credits)

any other Religious Studies course

RELIGIOUS STUDIES COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

REL 101 Introduction to Religion *AEH Credits: 5.00

Gen Ed Core-Aesthetics & Humanities

Introduction to Religion is a course in the academic study and understanding of religion as an aspect of human experience and culture. We will approach the study of religion using the insights and methods of history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy, comparative religions, and academic theology. The course will examine both the practical and the conceptual aspects of religion, and will raise and consider important issues, among them: the origins and development of religion, similarities and differences between Eastern and Western types of religion, varieties of religious experience and expression, and religion and belief in life after death. The course will also exam some of the radical critiques of religion.

REL 102- Introduction to World Religions*AEH Credits: 5.00

Gen Ed Core-Aesthetics & Humanities

This course is designed to introduce the student to the various religions and religious practices around the world. The course will significantly emphasize the social context and aesthetic dimension of religious phenomena. The course will emphasize historical development and current practices of major religious beliefs.

REL 210 - Selected Topics Credits: 1.00 TO 6.00

An in-depth study of a topic of interest to both students and faculty.

REL 310 - Selected Topics Credits: 1.00 TO 6.00

An in-depth study of a topic of interest to both students and faculty.

REL 321-Buddhism Credits: 5.00

An examination of the basic doctrines of Buddhism as they have developed over a 2500 year period in India, Tibet, Mongolia, China and Japan.

REL 322-Islam: 5.00

This course will provide a general overview of the history, arts and basic tenets of Islam as well as a focused view of the early history of Islam in the Middle East, the medieval history of Islam in South Asia and contemporary movements in Islam as they impact the USA.

REL 323-Yoga Philosophy: 2.00

Yoga is a Sanskrit term meaning "to join;" in this case, joining the person to God. One of the six classical schools of Indian Philosophy, Yoga is known for its sophisticated articulation of philosophy and its methods of meditation to test that philosophy. This course will examine the origins of Yoga in Neolithic India, its literary history and modern expression.

REL 324- Philosophy of Sacred Art: 5.00

The Perennial Philosophy asserts that God is the hidden ground or essence of all persons and things. Modern exponents of the Perennial Philosophy have proposed a set of principles which distinguish sacred from secular art. This course will review, critique and test those principles.

REL 330- Divine Feminine: Image and Myth: 5.00

The ancient goddess revealed herself by emerging from the earth in archaeological digs around the world over the last two centuries. We will look at her art forms and myths through the eyes of brilliant poets, scholars, artists and psychologists who reflect the divine feminine back to us. Students will use journaling, art making and personal research to explore the contemporary reemergence of the goddess.

REL 410 - Selected Topics Credits: 1.00 TO 6.00

An in-depth study of a topic of interest to both students and faculty.

REL 425 – Religions of South Asia: 5.00

A historical and comparative exposition of the major religious trends and schools of thought that developed in the "Indian subcontinent" and spread from there to Central and South-east Asia.