



# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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## Introduction to Religious Studies

By introducing students to a variety of religious traditions, the religious studies curriculum helps students think broadly and clearly about this critical force in world affairs. Majors learn thinking, reading, writing, and communication skills that prepare them for diverse careers and advanced degrees.

Course offerings cover a spectrum of global traditions and employ various teaching methods. Religion always requires interpretation. Through fascinating course materials, the faculty prepare students to apply scholarly methods for interpreting religion. Students examine the histories of various religions, their sacred texts, and the social, philosophical, and ethical questions that arise in diverse traditions.

## Religious Studies Major

The religious studies major is designed to provide students with both breadth and depth in the academic study of religion. The course of study is composed of a minimum of nine units, which must include: five courses at the 300 level, excluding Religion 388 and 395-396.

The department encourages dual majors. In addition, related courses in other departments may be included within the required nine units, with advance approval of the religious studies department. No more than two courses outside of religious studies can be accepted as a part of those nine major units.

Courses include the Sacred Arts of India; Ethics, Religion, and the Environment; Body and Sex in the Religious Literature of the World; and Witchcraft and Its Interpreters.

## What Can Religious Studies Graduates Do?

The short answer is — anything they want. Because religious studies courses emphasize critical reading and writing, the major prepares students for graduate school, law school, and any endeavor that requires critical imagination and superior interpretive skills.

## Religious Studies Minor

The religious studies minor provides basic grounding in the academic study of religion. The minor requires five units in religion, reflecting the diversity of areas and approaches that make up the department. At least three courses must be at the 300 level, excluding Religion 388 and 395-396.

## Graduate School Acceptances

Recent majors and minors have conducted graduate work in such diverse fields as religion, law, arts management, international affairs, and social work at:

Duke University  
Georgetown University  
Harvard University  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Virginia  
Yale University

## Faculty

### Stephanie Cobb

Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Author of *Divine Deliverance: Pain and Painlessness in Early Christian Martyr Texts* and *Dying to Be Men: Gender and Language in Early Christian Martyr Texts*

Area of specialty: interrelationship between paganism, Judaism, and Christianity in the 1st and 2nd centuries C.E.

### Scott Davis

Ph.D., Princeton University

Author of *Believing and Acting: The Pragmatic Turn in Comparative Religion and Ethics*

Area of specialty: ethics and philosophy of religion from Middle Ages to the present

### Jane Geaney

Ph.D., University of Chicago

Author of *Epistemology of the Senses in Early Chinese Thought and Language as Bodily Practice in Early China*

Area of specialty: conceptions of language and the body in Early China

### Mimi Hanaoka

Ph.D., Columbia University

Author of *Authority and Identity in Medieval Islamic Historiography*

Area of specialty: the formation and articulation of Muslim identity in early Islamic Persia

### Miranda Shaw

Ph.D., Harvard University

Author of *Buddhist Goddesses of India*  
Her text, *Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism*, has been translated into numerous languages.

Areas of specialty: ancient and modern goddess traditions, religions of India and the Himalayas

### Douglas Winiarski

Department chair

Ph.D., Indiana University

Author of the Bancroft Prize-winning book, *Darkness Falls in the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England*

Areas of specialty: religions of North America, history of the Colonial period



## OFFICE OF ADMISSION

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