REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES: 34+ semester hours that must include:

1. Choose one of the following introductory-level courses: RELS 101, 103, 105, 106, 115, 117, 118, 120, or 185
2. RELS 210: Theories in the Study of Religions (only taught in spring semester)
3. One of the Abrahamic/Near Eastern religions: RELS 223 (Ancient Near East), 225 (Judaism), 230 (Christianity), or 235 (Islam)
4. One of the Asian religions: RELS 240 (Buddhism), 245 (Hinduism), 247 (Daoism), or 248 (Religions of China & Japan)
5. One of the American religions: RELS 250 (American Religions), 253 (Religions of Charleston), 260 (Native American Religions), 270 (African American Religions)
6. One of the following methodology courses: RELS 201 (Hebrew Bible/Old Testament), 202 (New Testament), 205 (Sacred Texts of the East), 253 (Religions of Charleston), 270 (African American Religions), 280 (Religion and Film), or 310 (Sacred Texts)
7. RELS 450: Senior Seminar (only taught in fall semester)
8. RELS 451: Capstone Colloquium (1 credit hour only; only taught in spring semester)
9. One additional course at the 200-level or above
10. Two additional courses at the 300-level or above
11. Additional elective: 1 additional course
   - With the approval of the Chair of Religious Studies, one course (200 level or above) in a related discipline may be substituted for one of the courses listed under 9 above.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES: 18+ semester hours that must include:

1. One introductory level course: RELS 101, 103, 105, 106, 115, 117, 118, 120, 185
2. One additional religious tradition course: RELS 223, 225, 230, 235, 240, 245, 247, 248, 250, 253, 260 or 270
3. One additional methodology course: RELS 201, 202, 205, 253, 270, 280 or 310
4. One additional course at the 300-level or above
5. Two additional courses in Religious Studies.

### RELS COURSE OFFERINGS FOR FALL 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>CRN</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Meeting Days</th>
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<tr>
<td>RELS101.01</td>
<td>13487</td>
<td>Approaches to Religion: Pilgrimage to Sacred Places in North America and India</td>
<td>TTh</td>
<td>1215-1330</td>
<td>Bjerken</td>
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<td>1400-1515</td>
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<td>MWF</td>
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<td>RELS101.05</td>
<td>16387</td>
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<td>MW</td>
<td>1400-1515</td>
<td>LeVasseur</td>
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<td>Bjerken</td>
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<td>TTh</td>
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<td>RELS348.01</td>
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<td>Asian Religions in America</td>
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<td>1520-1640</td>
<td>Siegler</td>
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<td>TTh</td>
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<td>MWF</td>
<td>9000-0950</td>
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</table>
RELIGIOUS STUDIES FALL 2022 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

RELS 101.01 Approaches to Religion: Pilgrimage to Sacred Places in North America and India
Prof. Bjerken
TTH 1215-1330
This course introduces students to American Christianity and Indian Hinduism by focusing on their distinctive understandings of sacred place and pilgrimage. We begin by reading the studies of two “Road Scholars” who seek to understand Christianity in the South while they undertake a common American ritual: the road trip. After visiting many odd and fascinating roadside religious attractions in the US, we travel to the ancient and living city of Varanasi in India. This sacred city will serve as a lens through which the worldview of Hindu pilgrims comes into focus. We will rely on texts that combine travel narrative and religious study, as well as documentary films to gain insight into the rituals, sacred stories, and travels and travails of the pilgrims.

RELS 101.02/03 Approaches to Religion: Messiahs & Messianic Movements
Prof. Huddlestun
MW 1400-1515 and 1600-1715
This course looks at messiahs and messiah-like figures in three religious traditions: ancient Israelite/Jewish tradition, Islam (both Sunni and Shi‘i), and Buddhism (particularly the future Buddha Maitreya). The approach will be mostly historical and more comparative as the course progresses, with some attention to theories regarding failed messianic movements. In addition, the messiah theme provides an entry into many of the central ideas or concepts of each tradition.

RELS 101.04 Approaches to Religion: Make-Believe or Making Belief?: Performance and Ritual in the Study of Religion
Prof. Lowe
MWF 1100-1150
This course is designed to introduce students to theoretical and methodological approaches to the academic study of religion. The course will take as its topical center of gravity the notion that much of what we call “religion” can be found in our “outer” life rather than our “inner” life. To that end, we will explore religion using the theories and analytical tools of both Performance Studies and Ritual Theory. In each of three units, the course will use film, music, lectures, and weekly readings paired with in-class and online discussions. By the end of the semester, students will be able to demonstrate understanding of several theoretical approaches to the study of religion and corresponding methodologies as well as some familiarity with several religious traditions from around the world.

RELS 101.05 Approaches to Religion: Nature as Sacred and Intentional Communities (First Year Seminar Section Only)
Prof. LeVasseur
MW 1400-1515
This general education humanities course introduces students to the academic study of religion by utilizing a comparative approach to exploring how religions conceive of and from intentional communities. Specific focus will be paid to “nature as sacred” forms of religiosity, and to religious groups responding to the climate crisis, and how people in these religious groups are creating intentional forms of community to generate pro-sustainable ethics and behaviors to thrive in the 21st century.

RELS 105.01/02 Introduction to World Religions
Prof. Keegan
TTh 0925-1040 and 1050-1205
This course will explore a variety of human cultural traditions from around the world that are traditionally considered “World Religions,” including Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Daoism, and Navajo Religion. In addition to learning about important practices, texts, objects, and beliefs, the course will pay attention to the word “religion” and what it means in particular times and places. The course will, therefore, be both historical and anthropological, looking at fascinating moments of the past and exploring present practices and politics of religion. Using lecture and discussion, film and music, the course will explore both the mundane and the extraordinary as integral pieces of human religious experience.

RELS 105.0 Introduction to World Religions (Online Synchronous)
Prof. Tarleton
MWF 1300-1350
Students will encounter religious traditions from around the world and be challenged to ask what is a “World Religion” anyway. Who is excluded from this category, and who is included? This course will use material culture artifacts (including movies, objects, television, art, and ritual sites) to explore how different religious traditions engage with materiality to express their worldview, their history, and their own self-definitions of what we call “religion.”
RELS 105.04  Introduction to World Religions (Epress II - Online Synchronous)  Prof. Tarleton
MW 1600-1845
Students will encounter religious traditions from around the world and be challenged to ask what is a “World Religion” anyway. Who is excluded from this category, and who is included? This course will use material culture artifacts (including movies, objects, television, art, and ritual sites) to explore how different religious traditions engage with materiality to express their worldview, their history, and their own self-definitions of what we call “religion.”

RELS 115.01/02  Religion and Society: Black Religion and Black Nationalism  Prof. Cressler
from Slave Rebellions to Black Lives Matter
TTh 0925-1040 and 1050-1205
This course introduces students to the religious ideas and practices from across the African diaspora that gave rise to the political tradition now known as “Black nationalism.” While the tradition is often imagined to be secular (even anti-religious), this course explores the deep religious roots of Black struggles to create a new nation—from slave rebellions to the Black Power revolution to our contemporary Black Lives Matter movement. The course will survey Black religion and Black nationalism across the past four centuries. Students will also hone the analytical tools to think critically about “nation,” “race,” and “religion” as modern categories.

RELS 118.01/02  Modern History of Religions: Religion and the Making of Modern East Asia  Prof. Siegler
MWF 1000-1050 or 1100-1150
How has religion influenced the political, social and economic transformation of East Asia from the 16th century to the present? We begin with important background information about Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism and Shinto, and popular religion. Then we examine how all those religions, plus modern permutations such as Maoism-as-religion and New Religious Movements (“cults”) have developed over the last 500 years of Chinese and Japanese history. From Tokyo to Tibet, from the Taiping Rebels to Jesuit missionaries, this class will demonstrate how Modern East Asia was shaped by religious forces.

RELS 185.01/02  Women and Religion (Online Synchronous)  Prof. Tarleton
MWF 1100-1150 and 1200-1250
How have women encountered religion through history? How have ideas about femininity in religion affected social structures, politics, and culture? This course will focus on images and roles of women within various global religious traditions. This course will use primary and secondary texts, as well as material culture artifacts, works of art by and about women, and film to offer a robust and careful consideration of the roles that women have held in traditions over time. Attention and care will be paid to the ways that gender and identity construction has changed over time, and the expectations of roles, participation, and leadership from women in certain religious spaces.

RELS 230.01  The Christian Tradition  Prof. Lowe
MW 1400-1515
This course explores the history, spread, and development of Christianity from its first century Palestinian origins to the impact of its numerous iterations in cultures across the globe. Starting and returning always to the question “what is Christianity?,” the course will give special attention to diversity – geographical, cultural, social, and theological – within the tradition. Therefore, in addition to important figures, dates and events that narrate Western Christian history, the course will seek to highlight Christian traditions as they developed in Asia, Africa and the indigenous Americas; the role of women in the development and spread of Christianity; and the impact of the effort to develop and maintain something called “orthodoxy.”

RELS 245.01  The Hindu Tradition  Prof. Bjerken
TTh 0925-1040
This course provides a comprehensive overview of Hinduism's long history in India and its complex network of sacred stories, ritual practices, and rich philosophical thought. A number of enduring themes will be explored that pertain to Hindu philosophy (e.g. the relationship between Self and body), Hindu practices (sacrificial ritual, asceticism, and yoga), and politics and society (Hindu kingship, caste, gender politics, and Hindu nationalism). We will trace the transformation of Hinduism from ancient to modern India and into America today. Hindu culture is plural and inclusive, and it has evolved to meet the needs of people of different geographic regions within India and abroad. We will rely extensively on primary Hindu texts, but we will also read a pilgrim's travelogue, short stories, and watch documentary films that illustrate how Hindu ideas and practices are woven into many aspects of Hindus' daily life.
RELS 253.01 Religions of Charleston  
Prof. Keegan  
TTh 1340-1455
This field-work based course will introduce students to past and present religion in Charleston and the Lowcountry. The “Holy City” is home to a number of historic churches, the oldest synagogue in continuous use in the United States, a Buddhist temple, Muslim mosques, a Hindu temple, and much more. Students will learn and apply ethnographic methods in the study of religion by exploring the religious spaces and communities of the surrounding area. Students must be available for regular weekend and/or evening trips to engage with local religious communities.

RELS 348.01 Asian Religions in America  
Prof. Siegler  
MW 1520-1640
This seminar traces the history of various Asian traditions (especially Buddhism, Hinduism, and Daoism), as they become part of the American religious landscape. Modes of transmission to be examined include immigration, mission work, literature, and mass media. Students will learn about the history of specific Asian nationalities’ experience in the U.S. and about the assimilation and appropriation of their religions. We will read excerpts from primary works by missionaries, gurus, and monks, as well as by basketball coach Phil Jackson, martial artist Bruce Lee, and hip-hop pioneers the Beastie Boys. Along the way, students will be introduced to important concepts in the study of religion and will have the opportunity to research a local Asian religious group.

RELS 450.01 Senior Seminar: Prophets, Messiahs and Their Followers  
Prof. Huddlestun  
TTh 1215-1330
In this seminar, we delve into some pivotal scholarly issues in the ongoing debates, past and present, surrounding the “founding figures,” and origins generally, in three religious traditions: Buddhism (the Buddha), Christianity (Jesus), and Islam (Muhammad). Our primary focus is less on what these figures may or may not have taught per se – although this is certainly relevant for assessing their position vis-a-vis the society they purportedly addressed – and more concerned with matters of historiography, presentation, authority, legitimacy, and the construction of identity (among their followers) in each tradition. Particular attention is given to the application of social science theories or models and the extent to which these may or may not explain the positive reception of a founder's teaching and the “success” of their movement. Some key questions addressed are: What types of sources do we possess and how far removed chronologically are they from the putative historical figure they describe? Who produced these sources and what, if anything, do they tell us about their subject, as opposed to the later views and needs of the communities that produced them? Do these figures bring something new or unique to the tradition, or are they simply reformers of the status quo? How do we account for the initial success and spread of these movements? Beyond this, we consider the role of the modern scholar in such quests and the extent to which that scholar’s own identity and socio-political and/or religious location shapes their construction of a founding figure and their early community.

FYSE 134 How to Survive an Apocalypse  
Prof. Cressler  
TTh 1340-1455
Americans are obsessed with imagining the end of the world. Post-apocalyptic fiction tops the pop culture charts today. Why? Where do our doomsday stories come from? What do they teach us about ourselves? And can they teach us how to live better lives? This course will ask big questions as we dive deep into movies, shows, comics, and novels, including The Walking Dead and Octavia Butler’s Parable of the Sower. We will unpack the religious roots of “apocalypse” as an idea. We will study the history of real-life apocalypses, such as the genocides ushered in by European colonialism around the world. Ultimately, this course asks what the end of the world might look like and invites us to consider the religious, cultural, and political resources necessary for survival.

HONS 175 Approaches to Religion: Make-Believe or Making Belief?: Performance and Ritual in the Study of Religion  
Prof. Lowe  
MWF 0900-0950
This course is designed to introduce students to theoretical and methodological approaches to the academic study of religion. The course will take as its topical center of gravity the notion that much of what we call “religion” can be found in our “outer” life rather than our “inner” life. To that end, we will explore religion using the theories and analytical tools of both Performance Studies and Ritual Theory. In each of three units, the course will use film, music, lectures, and weekly readings paired with in-class and online discussions. By the end of the semester, students will be able to demonstrate understanding of several theoretical approaches to the study of religion and corresponding methodologies as well as some familiarity with several religious traditions from around the world.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>CRN</th>
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<tr>
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<td>6/7 – 7/7/22</td>
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<td>7/12 – 8/10/22</td>
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<td>7/12 – 8/10/22</td>
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<td>Lowe</td>
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**MAYMESTER 2022 – 5/16 – 6/3/22**

**RELS 105.02 Introduction to World Religions (Online Asynchronous) Prof. LeVasseur**

This online course is designed to introduce students to the more popular religions of the globe in terms of adherents. Adopting an approach that is comparative and historical, the course investigates the origins and contemporary flourishing of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students will learn about these religions by focusing on charismatic founders; sacred texts and rituals; and how followers use their religious identities to navigate contemporary issues ranging from homosexuality to climate change, from health care to abortion. The class consists of online lectures, reading works of scholarship, watching videos, and actively participating in online discussion groups. These discussions will investigate how religion is a driving force behind so many contemporary social and political issues and why we need to cultivate religious literacy as global citizens.

**SUMMER I 2022 – 6/7 – 7/7/22**

**RELS 105.01 Introduction to World Religions (Online Asynchronous) Prof. Lowe**

This online course will explore a variety of human cultural traditions from around the world that are traditionally considered “World Religions.” In addition to learning about important practices, texts, objects, and beliefs, the course will always be paying attention to the word “religion” and the history of the idea of “world religions.” The course will, therefore, be both historical and anthropological, looking at fascinating moments of the past and exploring present practices and politics of religion. Using lecture and discussion, film and music, the course will explore both the mundane and the extraordinary as integral pieces of human religious experience.

**SUMMER II 2022 – 7/12 – 8/10/22**

**RELS 105.03 Introduction to World Religions (Online Asynchronous) Prof. LeVasseur**

This online course is designed to introduce students to the more popular religions of the globe in terms of adherents. Adopting an approach that is comparative and historical, the course investigates the origins and contemporary flourishing of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students will learn about these religions by focusing on charismatic founders; sacred texts and rituals; and how followers use their religious identities to navigate contemporary issues ranging from homosexuality to climate change, from health care to abortion. The class consists of online lectures, reading works of scholarship, watching videos, and actively participating in online discussion groups. These discussions will investigate how religion is a driving force behind so many contemporary social and political issues and why we need to cultivate religious literacy as global citizens.

**RELS 230.01 The Christian Tradition (Online Asynchronous) Prof. Lowe**

This online course explores the history, spread, and development of Christianity from its first century Palestinian origins to the impact of its numerous iterations in cultures across the globe. Starting and returning always to the question “what is Christianity?,” the course will give special attention to diversity – geographical, cultural, social, and theological – within the tradition. Therefore, in addition to important figures, dates and events that narrate Western Christian history, the course will seek to highlight Christian traditions as they developed in Asia, Africa and the indigenous Americas; the role of women in the development and spread of Christianity; and the impact of the effort to develop and maintain something called “orthodoxy.”