Religious Studies

Get to know RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Religion plays a major role in shaping and influencing various cultures, and historical and political movements, across the globe. Thus, understanding religious traditions and their impact on diverse modern issues is vital preparation for building a career in the global marketplace.

Religious Studies involves examining the history of religious traditions, comparing the ideas and values of different religious systems, and understanding the place and function of religion in society. Students of religion investigate why people are religious, where religion comes from, and how it should be defined and understood. Thus, Religious Studies gives students opportunities to interact with many different local, regional, and global issues.

At Queen’s the approach to the study of religion is non-confessional, diverse, multidisciplinary, and interdisciplinary. Students receive the information and tools they need to critically analyze religion while gaining exposure to views from a variety of traditions. Students learn how to investigate and assess the impact of religion in today’s world, critically examine complex ideas, and express their own points of view clearly and effectively.

Degree OPTIONS

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
Major / Medial / Minor
Bachelor of Arts (General)

A Common START

Students in our Faculty are admitted into Arts, Science or Computing but the focus is on a common first year. Through self-exploration, and while you settle into university life, you have the chance to work with our advisors and faculty to uncover where your real interests and opportunities for success are. Sometimes that discovery happens fairly quickly, and for other students it takes some work and time before the “ah-ha!” happens – either way your first year will be a great experience at Queen’s.

Course HIGHLIGHTS

Religious Studies courses offer a variety of approaches from which to examine societal matters through courses such as Religion and Violence, Religion and Sport, Mythology of the Ancient Near East, Religion and Sex, Yoga in India and the West, Religion and Environment, and Religion and Film. At the same time, the program offers in-depth study of traditions such as Hinduism, Islam, Daoism, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, and the Religions of Native Peoples.

That is a degree from Queen’s.
Religious Studies MAJOR MAP

BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS (MAJOR, MEDIAL, MINOR) | BACHELOR OF ARTS (GENERAL) | BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS (MINOR)

1ST YEAR

GET THE COURSES YOU NEED

Take first year courses in the study of religion (RELS 131 OR 161) or pick up one of these in a later year.

For plan requirements or thresholds, see the Arts and Science website. Speak to an Academic Advisor at the Arts and Science Office or the Undergraduate Chair for help. Declare RELS as a Major or a Medial.

GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Join teams or clubs on campus, such as the Queen's International Affairs Association; see the Co-Curricular Opportunities Directory or the AMS Clubs Directory for ideas.

GET CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY

Volunteer on or off campus with different community organizations such as Martha's Table or Big Brothers, Big Sisters.

GET THINKING GLOBALLY

The Queen's University International Centre is your first stop to learn how to internationalize your degree or to leverage your existing cross-cultural experience.

Speak to a QUIC advisor or get involved in their programs, events and training opportunities.

GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

Grappling with program decisions? Go to Majors Night for targeted networking with alumni working in trades or thematic courses.

Explore careers of interest by reading books in the Career Services Information Area, such as The Ethical Careers Guide. For more information check out Career Cruising or by finding and connecting with alumni on LinkedIn.

Caution: *This map is meant as a guide to provide suggestions throughout your university career. The activities, resources, and careers mentioned are possibilities – you are not restricted to them and you don’t have to follow this exact timeline. Every person (including you!) will find their own unique path through their degree at Queen’s and beyond.

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2ND YEAR

GET THE COURSES YOU NEED

Select from a range of RELS courses in major religious traditions or thematic courses.

GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Consider becoming Departmental Student Council (DSC) representative for a RELS course.

Look into summer jobs by talking to the dept. or Career Services about work through SWEP or Work-Study. Consider entrepreneurial opportunities via programs like the Queen’s Innovation Connector Summer Initiative (QICS).

GET CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY

Attend public lectures sponsored by the School of Religion.

Start or continue volunteering with organizations such as the Queen’s Interfaith and Intercultural Society.

GET THINKING GLOBALLY

Is an exchange in your future? Start thinking about where you would like to study abroad. Apply in January for a 3rd year exchange through your faculty's International Office. If exchange isn’t for you, come talk to QUIC about some other options to gain international experience.

GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

Explore careers of interest by reading books in the Career Services Information Area, such as The Ethical Careers Guide. For more information check out Career Cruising or by finding and connecting with alumni on LinkedIn.

Start focusing on areas of interest. Research education requirements for careers of interest. If needed, prepare to take any required tests (like the LSAT or GMAT) and get help thinking about grad school from Career Service.

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3RD OR FINAL YEAR

GET THE COURSES YOU NEED

Take third year required courses.

Select from a range of RELS courses in major religious traditions or thematic courses.

GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Consider becoming Departmental Student Council (DSC) by becoming a DSC representative for an RELS course.

Get involved with the Departmental Student Council (DSC) of your faculty. If interested, apply for an Undergraduate Student Summer Research Fellowship (USSRF). Consider applying to do a 12-16 month QUIP internship between your third and fourth year.

GET CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY

Do targeted networking with alumni working in careers of interest by joining the LinkedIn group Queen’s Connects. Connect with professors at events or workshops hosted by the Department Student Council (DSC). If interested, attend the Queen’s Media and Journalism Conference or the QIAA Global Passport Online Database and Internship Fair.

GET THINKING GLOBALLY

Build your intercultural competence by getting involved with other cultures or by practicing or improving your language skills. Check QUIC’s resources for ideas to go abroad, and volunteer or attend one of their events.

GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

Start focusing on areas of interest. Research education requirements for careers of interest. If needed, prepare to take any required tests (like the LSAT or GMAT) and get help thinking about grad school from Career Service.

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4TH OR FINAL YEAR

GET THE COURSES YOU NEED

Take fourth year required courses.

Complete remaining required number of units.

Apply to graduate on SOLUS.

GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Consider becoming the Departmental Student Council Chair.

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs or other opportunities related to careers of interest. Assess what experience you’re lacking and fill in gaps with volunteering, clubs, or internships. - check out the Career Services skills workshop for help.

GET CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY

Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion and the American Academy of Religion.

Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in Religion.

GET THINKING GLOBALLY

Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking QUIC’s Intercultural Competency Certificate, and research possible immigration regulations.

International students interested in staying in Canada can speak with an International Student Advisor.

GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

Apply to jobs or future education, or make plans for other adventures. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, interviews, grad school applications, or other decisions.

Apply to the fall for SSHRC and OGS scholarships if applying to grad school in Ontario.

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Consider a 12-16 month QUIP Internship

Where could I go after graduation?

Advertising
Archives
Business administration
Counselling
Cultural affairs
Education
Ethics
Faith-based leadership
Foreign service
Human resources
Human rights
Immigration services
Industrial relations
International development
Journalism
Law
Library sciences
Family and labour relations
Museums
NGO field work and administration
Patient advocacy
Politics and government
Public and private research
Public policy
Public relations
Research
Social services
Teaching
Tourism
University professor

*Some careers may require additional training.

Visit careers.queensu.ca/majormaps.html for the online version with links!
Religious Studies
MAJOR MAP

How to use this map
• Got questions about careers and classes?
• Feeling a little lost or overwhelmed by choices?
• Wondering what you are “supposed” to be doing?

Use this map to plan for success in five overlapping areas of career and academic life. Each map helps you explore possibilities, set goals and track your accomplishments. To make your own custom map, use the My Major Map tool.

Don’t stress if you haven’t done all of the suggested activities. The map is not a prescription – it’s a tool for finding your own way at Queen’s.

Getting what you need to succeed in the workplace

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?
In a recent survey from the Canadian Council of Chief Executives the top 6 skills sought by employers were:
1 People skills
2 Communication skills
3 Problem-solving skills
4 Analytical abilities
5 Leadership skills
6 Industry-specific knowledge

HOW DO I GET THE SKILLS I NEED?
It is important to develop a balanced skill set – many of which you will develop during your studies. To stand out, take advantage of experiential learning through the multitude of clubs and activities in and around Queen’s. Check out the Get Relevant Experience section of this map.

WHAT CAN I LEARN STUDYING RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT QUEEN’S?
• People skills: articulate characteristics of religion as a cultural phenomenon in the social, political, and economic aspects of public life
• Communication skills: develop arguments through careful analysis, cogent writing, effective speaking, and critical thinking
• Problem-solving skills: employ the methods and theories used in the academic study of religion
• Analytic abilities: explore issues of history, culture, politics, race, gender, and science in the construction of religion
• Leadership skills: engage in self-reflective, open, informed, and civil conversation about diverse religious traditions
• Industry-specific knowledge: examine the historical, textual, and cultural dimensions of diverse religious traditions using primary and secondary literature in the study of religion

WHAT MAKES ME SPECIAL?
No one will get exactly the same experience as you. Take the time to think about what skills you have developed to be able to best explain them with compelling examples in future applications to employers and further education. For help with this, check out the Career Services skills workshop.

Religion
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