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 our 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 in Religious Studies
Bachelor of Arts (General)
Internship option available

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 at Queen’s will be a great experience.

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 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.

Queen’s ADMISSION

Students apply to Queen’s Arts (QA) through the OUAC (Ontario Universities Application Centre) website (ouac.on.ca). Secondary School prerequisites include six 4U and 4M courses, including a minimum of three 4U courses, one of which must be ENG4U. Applicants outside of Ontario may have additional requirements.
GET THE COURSES YOU NEED
In first year take courses in the study of religion (RELS 131 OR 161) or pick up one of these in a later year. Each Plan will have at least one required first-year course, including minors. It is important to take a variety of first-year courses to keep as many pathways open as possible for you going into second year. For details see the Arts and Science Academic Calendar.

GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
Join teams or clubs on campus, such as the Queen’s International Affairs Association, see the AMS Clubs Directory or the Queen’s Get Involved page for more 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
Grasping with program decisions? Go to Majors Night or get some help wondering about career options from Career Services. Build your transferrable skills in time management, organization, writing and more with Student Academic Success Services.

1ST YEAR
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2ND YEAR
Select from a range of 200-level RELS courses in major religious traditions or thematic courses. Need help mapping all of your core, option, supporting and elective courses (including those not listed above) to make sure you will have what you need to complete your degree? Use the Course Mapping Tool on the Arts and Science website. Want to enhance your degree? Consider a certificate in Academic Writing or explore other certificates available.

3RD YEAR
In third year take RELS 334 and 335. Select from a range of 300-level RELS courses in major religious traditions or thematic courses. As your courses become more complex, learn to think, read and write more critically with Student Academic Success Services.

4TH OR FINAL YEAR
In fourth year take RELS 401. Complete remaining required units for your plan. By fourth year you should be working on your remaining option and elective courses. Make sure to map your minor and / or certificate(s) as well. Apply to graduate in SOLUS.

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.

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Religious Studies
MAJOR MAP

How to use this map
Use the 5 rows of the map to explore possibilities and plan for success in the five overlapping areas of career and academics. The map just offers suggestions – you don’t have to do it all! To make your own custom map, use the My Major Map tool.

A balanced approach leads to long-term success. While you will learn a lot from your studies, taking time to get relevant experience outside of the classroom, build your network, and gain international experience, will position you to be more competitive in your job search or grad school applications.

Get started thinking about the future now – where do you want to go after your degree? Having tentative goals (like careers or grad school) while working through your degree can help with short-term decisions about courses and experiences, but also help you keep motivated for success.

Get the help you need
Queen’s provides you with a broad range of support services from your first point of contact with the university through to graduation. At Queen’s, you are never alone. We have many offices dedicated to helping you learn, think and do.

Ranging from help with academics and careers, to physical, emotional, or spiritual resources – our welcoming living and learning environment offers the programs and services you need to be successful, both academically and personally, and Queen’s wants you to succeed! Check out the Student Affairs website for available resources.

Succeed in the workplace

What employers want
The Canadian Council of Chief Executives list the top 6 skills sought by employers as:

1. People skills
2. Communication skills
3. Problem-solving skills
4. Analytical abilities
5. Leadership skills
6. Industry-specific knowledge

Take the time to think about the unique skills you have developed at Queen’s, starting with the skills list here for ideas. Explaining your strengths with compelling examples will be important for applications to employers and further education. For help, check out the Career Services skills workshop.

What can I learn studying RELIGIOUS STUDIES?
• People skills with an ability to articulate characteristics of religion as a cultural phenomenon in the social, political, and economic aspects of public life
• Communication skills to develop arguments through careful analysis, cogent writing, effective speaking, and critical thinking
• Problem solving skills to employ the methods and theories used in the academic study of religion
• Analytic abilities to engage in self-reflective, open, informed, and civil conversation about diverse religious traditions
• Industry specific knowledge to examine the historical, textual, and cultural dimensions of diverse religious traditions using primary and secondary literature in the study of religion

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