Why RELIGIOUS STUDIES?

Religion plays a major role in shaping and influencing various cultures and historical and political movements around the world. Understanding religious traditions and their impact on diverse modern issues is vital preparation for building a career in the global marketplace. Religious Studies involves, among other things, examining the history of religious traditions, comparing ideas and values, and understanding the place and function of religion in society, including varieties of secularism. Students of religion investigate why people are religious, where religion comes from, and how it can be analyzed.

Why QUEEN’S?

Our MA in Religious Studies equips you for careers involving:

- Religious literacy: students gain exposure to religious diversity, and tools for assessing the impact of religion today and in history.
- Research skills and information literacy: students learn methods and theories for analyzing complex information and designing research studies.
- Communication skills: students get professional development in expressing their own points of view effectively, and publishing their work in academic and popular media.

“As a student at Queen’s School of Religion I had the opportunity to not only explore challenging concepts, theories, and histories from an interdisciplinary perspective. I also developed and tested my own skills in the ‘real world’ by planning and running a conference addressing the Truth and Reconciliation’s Call to Action #6, which allowed me to mobilize knowledge, learn about the practical side to academic event planning, and engage closely with community members.”

-- Kacey Dool, MA

TOPICS: Religion and...

- Race
- Gender
- Violence
- Social Justice
- Public Policy
- Global Development
- Politics in the Middle east
- Diaspora
- Ethics
- Popular Culture
- Sport
- Nature
- Science
- Decolonization

TRADITIONS and Areas:

- Indigenous Knowledges
- New Religious Movements
- Secularity Studies
- South Asian Studies
- Islamic Studies
- Jewish Studies
- Medieval Inter-religious Encounters
- Greco-Roman Religions
- Christianity

Visit the School of Religion website to read faculty profiles. Contact the Graduate Coordinator to discuss your research interests before applying.

Program STRUCTURE

The Master’s in Religious Studies is a 12-month program: students take one core course and two elective courses in each of the fall and winter terms, a professional development course, then write a Master’s Research Essay over the summer.

Students are required to attend faculty colloquia and visiting speaker presentations, and are strongly encouraged to participate in conferences.
2021-2022

Religious Studies MA Map *

GREATING STARTED

• Start with key priorities like doing well in your coursework, developing a good relationship with your supervisor, and finalizing the topic for your Master’s Research Essay.
• Consider how your course papers can contribute to your research essay.
• Find your way through the academic process with help from departmental and Expanding Horizons professional development workshops, the departmental Grad Chat and the SGS Website.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

• Start to think about the audiences for your research.
• If you will be continuing graduate studies, apply for SSHRC and OGS funding.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

• Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRC, and the SGS Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory for more ideas.
• Serve on the departmental Graduate Committee or Committee on Religious Studies.
• Check out professional development workshops from Expanding Horizons and the School of Religion.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

• Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus.
• Consider volunteering with different community organizations, museums, and cultural studies groups.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

• Finding a career that fits starts with knowing yourself. Get help by taking a Career Services career planning workshop or meeting with a career counsellor. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? or The Academic Job Search from the Career Resource Area for advice on various career options.
• Start reading publications like University Affairs and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Browse non-academic labour market websites. Stay on the lookout for special events like School of Graduate Studies Career Week to explore your career pathways.
• Check admission test deadlines if needed for further studies.

INTERMEDIATE STAGE

• Complete your course requirements for your degree, and begin to research and write your research essay.
• Start regular meetings with your supervisor to ensure your research essay is on track.

WRAPING UP

• In consultation with your supervisor, submit your research essay to your Second Reader.
• Complete the necessary steps to degree completion.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Religious Studies can equip you with:
• Knowledge and technical skills
• Effective communication skills in multiple forms for diverse audiences
• Information management: prioritize, organize and synthesize large amounts of information
• Time management: meet deadlines and manage responsibilities despite competing demands
• Project management: develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions
• Creativity and innovation
• Perseverance
• Independence and experience as a collaborative worker
• Awareness, an understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility, responsible research and cultural sensitivity
• Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
• Leadership: initiative and vision leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?

A Master’s degree in Religious Studies can take your career in many directions. Many of our MA students choose to continue their academic inquiry with a PhD. Our Master’s students are equipped with a strong foundation for careers in:
• Academia and teaching
• Public policy research and analysis
• International development work
• Immigration
• Journalism
• Any setting which values an understanding of multi-culturalism and diversity

Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.
Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- 4-year Honours Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies (or equivalent).
- Grade requirements: minimum B+ cumulative average.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Writing sample of work completed for a previous course.
- If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The following minimum scores are required: (1) TOEFL iBT: Writing (24/30); Speaking (22/30); Reading (22/30); Listening (20/30). Applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score, or (2) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score and a 7.0 for each test band), or (3) PTE Academics: 65, or (4) CAEL CE -70 (minimum overall score).

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application due: February 1st.

Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

What about FUNDING?

M.A. students in Religious Studies receive minimum funding of $18,000 per year. Our funding package includes internal and external awards, and teaching and research assistantships. Some funding assistance is also available to participate in conferences outside of Queen's.

Apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a one time $5,000 top-up to Masters winners of federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies' information on awards and scholarships, or see what awards are offered through the School of Religion.