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 colloquiums and visiting speaker presentations, and are strongly encouraged to participate in conferences.
The coronavirus pandemic may impact how some activities are delivered in 2020-2021. Please check directly with the host of any activity on the map for the latest information.

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.

MA Map *

GETTING STARTED

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS
• 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 department Grad Chair and the SGS Habitat.

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.
• Consider positions in student services, the SOSR, 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.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE
• Start keeping an eportfolio of your skills, experiences and competencies.
• Use a Research Assistant or Teaching Assistant position to develop your research or teaching skills.
• For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enroll in SGS902 or the PTLT Certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.
• Sacramento, the School of Religion.
• Consider volunteering with different community organizations, museums, and cultural studies groups.
• Find a career that fits with knowing yourself. Get help by taking a Career Services career planning workshop or meeting with a career counselor. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? Or the Academic Job Search from the Career Resource Area.
• 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.

• Attend or present at a graduate conference.
• Apply to the University’s General Research Ethics Board for qualitative research.
• Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
• Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

• Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in settings outside the university, such as casual conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
• Investigate internships from MITACS and other sources.
• Check out opportunities for extra training through CTL, Expanding Horizons, MITACS, or other sources to boost your skills.

• Consult with your supervisor about submitting a paper for a conference or for publication.
• Attend a major conference in your field, such as the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion or the American Academy of Religion.
• Consider putting an article in The Conversation.

WRAPPING UP

• In consultation with your supervisor, submit your research essay to your Second Reader.
• Complete the necessary steps to degree completion.
• Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, and interviews.
• Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion or the American Academy of Religion.

• Participate in graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
• Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate hosted by QUC and Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre.
• If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an International Student Advisor.

• Explore different careers of interest by using Queens Connects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni. Check out Career Cruising for more information.
• If you are considering a PhD, explore programs of interest, reach out to faculty, and apply to PhD programs and external scholarships.
• Attend or present at a graduate conference.
• Apply to the University’s General Research Ethics Board for qualitative research.
• Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
• Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

• Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks. Start focusing on areas of interest. Research organizations of interest and start putting together your CV or resume for potential positions of interest. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, and interviews.
• Investigate internships from MITACS and other sources.
• Check out opportunities for extra training through CTL, Expanding Horizons, MITACS, or other sources to boost your skills.

• Consult with your supervisor about submitting a paper for a conference or for publication.
• Attend a major conference in your field, such as the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion or the American Academy of Religion.
• Consider putting an article in The Conversation.

Visit careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps for the online version with links!

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* This map is intended to provide suggestions for activities and careers, but everyone's abilities, experiences, and constraints are different. Build your own Grad Map using our online My Grad Map tool.
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 School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, (2) TOEFL iBT: Writing (24/30); Speaking (22/30); Reading (22/30); Listening (20/30), for a total of 88/120 (applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score), or (3) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score), or (4) PTE Academics: 65.

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.