Why GRADUATE STUDIES in 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 should be defined and understood.

The program also places an emphasis on contemporary theories and methods in the study of religion. Developing excellent research and writing skills is one of our most important outcomes. These skills are further honed as students have the opportunity to write a research essay that focuses on a particular religious tradition or phenomenon.

Why QUEEN’S?

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 analyze religion critically, while gaining exposure to views from a variety of ways of being religious. Students learn how to investigate and assess the impact of religion, both historically and in today’s world, critically examine complex ideas, and express their own points of view clearly and effectively.

“We offer an intellectually challenging twelve-month M.A. program, with generous financial assistance including the opportunity for every student to be a Teaching Assistant.

RESEARCH Areas

- Christian Origins
- Contemporary Judaism
- Diasporic Religion
- Greek and Roman Religions
- Hinduism and Buddhism
- Islam, Modernity and Democracy
- Race, Ethnicity and Religion
- Religion, Sex and Gender
- Religion and Sport
- Religion and Nature
- Religion, Non-religion and Culture
- Violence and religion

We encourage you to identify an area of research interest and contact the Graduate Coordinator before applying.

Visit the School of Religion website to read faculty profiles and learn more about faculty members’ research areas.

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.

Before completing the MA degree, students are required to give evidence of a reading knowledge of at least one language, in addition to English, selected from the languages of modern scholarship and/or necessary source languages.

Students are required to attend faculty colloquiums and visiting speaker presentations, and are strongly encouraged to participate in conferences.

“The MA program at Queen’s offers an approach to the study of religion that is very student-focused, where student success is measured not only in terms of publications and conference presentations but also in terms of individual intellectual growth and development.”

–Ian Cuthbertson, MA
**Religious Studies MA Map**

**Getting 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 coursework can contribute to your research essay.
- Find your way through the academic process with help from department and Expanding Horizons professional development workshops, the department Grad Chair and the SGS Habitat.

**Interim 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.

**Wrap Up**

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

**Achieve Your Academic Goals**

- **MA Map**
  - 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 coursework can contribute to your research essay.
  - Find your way through the academic process with help from department and Expanding Horizons professional development workshops, the department Grad Chair and the SGS Habitat.

**Maximize Research Impact**

- **MA Map**
  - 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 SOPS, 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**

- **MA Map**
  - 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 PUTL Certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

**Engage With Your Community**

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

**Launch Your Career**

- **MA Map**
  - Finding a career that fits starts with knowing yourself. Get help by taking a Career Services career planning workshop or meeting with a career counselor. Check out books like 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.

**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.

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

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