

RELIGION

Department Website: <https://www.smu.ca/religion/index.html> (<https://www.smu.ca/religion/>)

Department Email: religiousstudies@smu.ca

The Study of Religion is one of the most relevant and vibrant disciplines of study in the Arts. Our discipline deals broadly with the ways that people are religious in the world, as well as the ways that religion can operate as a force for a range of social and political changes. Our courses offer multi-disciplinary inquiries into how religion is defined, and the ways that the boundaries of religions are negotiated and lived, historically and in the present. Saint Mary's Department for the Study of Religion is home to a diverse faculty, and our course offerings include explorations of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Indigenous Spirituality and New Religious Movements. Beyond a traditions-based approach, our courses negotiate how religion impacts popular culture, migration, globalization, politics, and gender and sexuality. Students in this program will develop skills in critically reading various kinds of texts (scripture, film, historical material, etc.) as well as how to conduct field research on living religions.

Electives

Courses in the Study of Religion program are a useful addition to any program, providing students with an understanding of religious diversity and issues that cross many disciplines, from Anthropology and Business to History and Political Science, Development and Environmental Studies to the Sciences. First year students seeking an elective may take any Religion course at the 1000 or 2000 level. Students who have completed 30 credit hours of university course work in any discipline may register for 3000 level courses in Religion.

Religion courses at the 1000, 2000 or 3000 level satisfy a humanities requirement in the Arts Faculty; non-Commerce electives in the Sobey School of Business and the humanities requirements in the Faculty of Science.

Courses

The Religion program offers courses with three areas of focus: traditions, issues, and methodologies. Traditions based courses introduce and explore aspects of various religious traditions, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, the religious traditions of Vietnam, China and Japan, New Religious Movements, and Indigenous spiritual traditions. Courses with a focus on issues explore how these issues relate to religion and include religious diversity in Canada, love, death, violence, film, law, globalization, neoliberalism, gender and sexuality, childhood, ethics, development, and migration. Methodological courses provide the tools necessary for exploring traditions and issues deeply. They focus on the critical reading of texts (including scripture and film), and how to study living religions through field work (ethnography, participant observation and interviewing).

Programs

Degree Requirements

The Bachelor of Arts (BA) is a well-established, foundational degree and requires the requirements listed below alongside general graduation

requirements (<https://smu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/faculties/faculty-arts/bachelor-arts/>).

Religion courses at the 1000, 2000 or 3000 level satisfy a humanities requirement in the Arts Faculty; non-Commerce electives in the Sobey School of Business and the humanities requirements in the Faculty of Science.

Major in Religion

Students majoring in Religion must fulfill the equivalent of thirty-nine (39) credit hours in Religion courses. Normally, these will be distributed as follows:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Six (6) credit hours at the 1000 level		6
Fifteen (15) credit hours at the 2000 level		15
Nine (9) credit hours at 3000 level		9
Three (3) credit hours at the 4000 level		3
RELS 3351	Field Research Methods (RELS 3351 Field Research Methods) ¹	3
Three (3) credit hours of a textual analysis course: ¹		3
RELS 2370	Introduction to the Qur'an	
RELS 2377	The Hebrew Bible	
RELS 2378	The New Testament	
RELS 3303	Birth of Christianity in the Ancient World	
RELS 3356	Film and Religion	
Total Credit Hours		39

¹ Field Research Methods and the course designated as fulfilling the textual analysis course requirement cannot also count towards other requirements.

An overall grade point average of 2.00 must be maintained in the courses counted toward the major.

Minor or Concentration in Religion

A Minor in Religion provides the opportunity for students engaged in a one-hundred and twenty (120) credit hour undergraduate degree to specialize in the area of Religion. The Concentration in Religion is for students undertaking the ninety (90) credit hour program. The requirements for both are the same, and are as follows:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Twelve (12) credit hours at the 2000 level		12
Six (6) credit hours at the 3000 level		6
Six (6) additional credit hours at any level		6
Total Credit Hours		24

An overall grade point average of 2.00 must be maintained in the twenty-four (24) credit hours.

In a Religion minor or concentration, students must complete at least twelve (12) of the twenty-four (24) required credit hours at Saint Mary's.

Honours in Religion

An honours student must complete sixty (60) credit hours in Religion courses which include:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Complete all of the requirements for a Religion major		39
Twelve (12) additional credit hours at 3000 level		12
Three (3) additional credit hours at the 4000 level		3
RELS 4000	Honours Thesis Research RELS	3
RELS 4001	Honours Thesis Writing RELS	3
Total Credit Hours		60

Admission to an honours program normally requires Department approval no later than when a student has completed sixty (60) credit hours. In addition to the Faculty of Arts requirements for honours, a minimum grade point average of 3.00 in Religion courses is required for admission to, and continuation in, the honours program.

Student Counselling

Students completing a minor, a concentration, a major or honours must have their Religion courses approved by the undergraduate advisor on an annual basis. With renumbered or restructured courses, students are advised that they are not eligible to take a course for credit if they already have a credit for a comparable course, even if that course was taken at a different level.

Notes: With renumbered or restructured courses, students are advised that they are not eligible to take a course for credit if they already have a credit for a comparable course, even if that course was taken at a different level.

Course Groupings for Majors

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Course List		
1000 Level Courses		
RELS 1210	Introduction to Religion	3
RELS 1221	Judaism, Christianity and Islam	3
RELS 1222	Religions of Asia (formerly RELS 1220)	3
RELS 1251	Religion in Contemporary Culture	3
RELS 1252	Religious Diversity in Canada	3
RELS 1800-1825	Special Topics in Religion	6
RELS 1826-1849	Special Topics in Religion	3
2000 Level Courses		
ENGL 2327	The Bible and English Literature	3
ENGL 2328	The Catholic Tradition in Modern British Literature	3
RELS 2211	Religious Lives	3
RELS 2305	Women in Christianity	3
RELS 2310	Religion and Social Ethics	3
RELS 2317	Monsters	3
RELS 2318	Ghosts (formerly RELS 3318)	3
RELS 2323	Introduction to Islam	3
RELS 2324	World Christianity	3
RELS 2325	Myth and Story	3
RELS 2326	Introduction to Hinduism	3

RELS 2327	Introduction to Buddhism	3
RELS 2330	Spirituality and Work	3
RELS 2332	Religion and Childhood	3
RELS 2333	Gender, Sexuality and Religion Today	3
RELS 2342	Violence	3
RELS 2343	Introduction to Judaism	3
RELS 2347	Ecology and Religion	3
RELS 2350	Religion and Social Change	3
RELS 2351	Love (formerly RELS 1351)	3
RELS 2352	Death (formerly RELS 1352)	3
RELS 2353	Cults	3
RELS 2360	Religion and Food	3
RELS 2370	Introduction to the Qur'an	3
RELS 2377	The Hebrew Bible	3
RELS 2378	The New Testament	3
RELS 2401	Religions of China and Japan	3
RELS 2800-2825	Special Topics in Religion	6
RELS 2826-2849	Special Topics in Religion	3
3000 Level Courses		
ANCS 3317	Greek Sanctuaries (formerly CLAS 3317)	3
ANCS 3352	Women and Family in Ancient Greece (formerly CLAS 3352)	6
ANTH 3316	Anthropology of Religion	3
ANTH 3366	Worldview: Anthro Approaches	3
RELS 3010	Vietnamese Religious Traditions	3
RELS 3100	Religion and Development	3
RELS 3101	Law and Religion	3
RELS 3102	Neoliberalism and Religion	3
RELS 3220	African Diaspora Religions	3
RELS 3303	Birth of Christianity in the Ancient World	3
RELS 3311	Jesus Of Nazareth	3
RELS 3316	Anthropology of Religion	3
RELS 3330	Spirituality in the Workplace	3
RELS 3338	Religions and Art: The West	3
RELS 3351	Field Research Methods	3
RELS 3354	Indigenous Life and Social Justice	3
RELS 3356	Film and Religion	3
RELS 3359	Buddhist Diversity	3
RELS 3360	Engaged Buddhism	3
RELS 3373	Islam in South Asia	3
RELS 3374	Islam in North America	3
RELS 3800-3825	Special Topics in Religion	6
RELS 3826-3849	Special Topics in Religion	3
RELS 3876-3899	Directed Readings in Religion	3
4000 level Courses		
RELS 4000	Honours Thesis Research RELS	3
RELS 4001	Honours Thesis Writing RELS	3
RELS 4150	Religion and Globalization	3
RELS 4151	Religion and Migration	3
RELS 4200	Postcolonialism and Religion	3
RELS 4333	Religion Race & Gender	3
RELS 4800-4825	Special Topics in Religion	6

RELS 4826-4849	Special Topics in Religion	3
Methods Courses		
RELS 2370	Introduction to the Qur'an	3
RELS 2377	The Hebrew Bible	3
RELS 2378	The New Testament	3
RELS 3303	Birth of Christianity in the Ancient World	3
RELS 3351	Field Research Methods	3
RELS 3356	Film and Religion	3