



Twin Cities Campus

Religious Studies B.A.

Classical and Near Eastern Religions and Cultures

College of Liberal Arts

- Program Type: Baccalaureate
- Requirements for this program are current for Spring 2020
- Required credits to graduate with this degree: 120
- Required credits within the major: 31 to 50
- Degree: Bachelor of Arts

Students in religious studies are trained in the critical study of religious thought, practice, institutions, and communities throughout the world and across time periods. The subject of religion is by its very nature interdisciplinary, attracting interest from many perspectives, including textual and literary studies, history, sociology, anthropology, the arts, and philosophy.

Students in the religious studies program select one of two tracks. The "religion, culture, and society" track is designed for students who seek to study religious traditions broadly or comparatively. The "texts and traditions" track is for students who seek to study a single tradition deeply, reading its foundational texts in their original language. Both tracks examine religion as a social and cultural force affecting fundamental issues of our world. All majors take courses in at least two religious traditions and develop an interdisciplinary concentration area consisting of four courses, selected from a variety of departments and focused on a theme, tradition, time period, location, practice, or set of questions. The area of concentration must be approved by the major advisor.

Program Delivery

This program is available:

- via classroom (the majority of instruction is face-to-face)

Admission Requirements

For information about University of Minnesota admission requirements, visit the [Office of Admissions website](#).

General Requirements

All students are required to complete general University and college requirements including writing and liberal education courses. For more information about University-wide requirements, see the [liberal education requirements](#). Required courses for the major or minor in which a student receives a D grade (with or without plus or minus) do not count toward the major or minor (including transfer courses).

Program Requirements

Students in Track II are required to complete 4 semester(s) of language connected to their area of concentration, with a grade of C-, or better, or demonstrate proficiency in the language(s) as defined by the department or college. Students in Track I do not have a language requirement that is specific to the major. Students in Track I are required to complete 4 semester(s) of any language, with a grade of C-, or S, or better, or demonstrate proficiency in the language(s) as defined by the department or college.

CLA BA degrees require 18 upper-division (3xxx-level or higher) credits outside the major designator. These credits must be taken in designators different from the major designator and cannot include courses that are cross-listed with the major designator. The major designator for the Religious Studies BA is RELS.

At least 12 upper-division credits in the major must be taken at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities campus. This includes learning abroad courses taken for resident credit.

Students may earn a BA or a minor in religious studies, but not both.

The following restrictions apply to students also completing a major in Jewish studies, biblical studies, or history: (1) the subjects of the courses selected to fulfill the area concentration requirement must be well outside of the focus of the other major in question; (2) the chosen sub-plan should include a comparative element that distinguishes it from the other major.

All incoming CLA freshmen must complete the First-Year Experience course sequence.

Preparatory Courses

The preparatory course ensures that students are introduced to the academic study of religion and understand how it is different from what they may have experienced in their own families or religious institutions. Courses that do not appear on this list may be accepted with prior consent by the major adviser.



Take exactly 1 course(s) totaling exactly 3 credit(s) from the following:

- RELS 1001 - Introduction to the Religions of the World [GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 1002 - Contemporary Issues in Religion, Culture, and Society: An Introduction to Religion [AH] (3.0 cr)
- AMST 1011 *{Inactive}*[CIV] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 1011 *{Inactive}*[CIV] (3.0 cr)
- JWST 1034 - Introduction to Jewish History and Cultures [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 1034 - Introduction to Jewish History and Cultures [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 1534 - Introduction to Jewish History and Cultures [HIS] (3.0 cr)
- CNRC 1082 - Jesus in History, Art & Culture [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 1082 - Jesus in History, Art & Culture [HIS] (3.0 cr)
- CNRC 1201 - The Bible: Context and Interpretation, World of the Hebrew Bible. [LITR] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 1201 - The Bible: Context and Interpretation, World of the Hebrew Bible [LITR] (3.0 cr)
or JWST 1201 - The Bible: Context and Interpretation, World of the Hebrew Bible [LITR] (3.0 cr)

Theory and Method in Religion

Take exactly 1 course(s) totaling exactly 3 credit(s) from the following:

- RELS 3001W - Theory and Method in Religion: Critical Approaches to the Study of Religion [WI] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5001 - Theory and Method in the Study of Religion: Critical Approaches to the Study of Religion (3.0 cr)

Electives

All electives must be approved by the advisor prior to inclusion in the program. The number of credits required for this requirement depends on a student's sub-plan. See further instructions for both tracks below in the Sub-plans requirements section.

Track I: Religion, Culture and Society

Take exactly 8 courses for at least 24 credits.

Area concentration: Four of the courses must focus on a specific area of concentration selected in consultation with the major advisor.

Religious Traditions Breadth: Two of the courses must focus on two different religious traditions, which are also different from the area concentration.

Contexts of Religions: The remaining two courses can be any from this list.

Track II: Texts and Traditions

Take exactly 6 courses for at least 18 credits.

Area concentration: Four of the courses must focus on a specific area of concentration, typically a specific religious tradition, selected in consultation with the major advisor.

Religious Traditions Breadth: Two of the courses must focus on two different religious traditions, which are also different from the area concentration. The area of concentration must be related to the language chosen within the sub-plan.

Take 6 - 8 course(s) totaling 18 or more credit(s) from the following:

- RELS 3626W - Witches, Seers, and Saints: Women, Gender, and Religion in the U.S. [WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3970 *{Inactive}*(1.0 cr)
- RELS 3993 - Directed Studies (1.0 - 4.0 cr)
- RELS 5504 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
- RELS 5993 - Directed Studies (1.0 - 4.0 cr)
- RELS 8190 - Comparative Seminar in Religions in Antiquity (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3013W - Biblical Law and Jewish Ethics [WI] (3.0 cr)
or JWST 3013W - Biblical Law and Jewish Ethics [WI] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5013W - Biblical Law and Jewish Ethics [WI] (3.0 cr)
or JWST 5013W - Biblical Law and Jewish Ethics [WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3034 - Introduction to Jewish History and Cultures [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3534 - Introduction to Jewish History and Cultures [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or JWST 3034 - Introduction to Jewish History and Cultures [HIS] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3070 - Topics in Religious Studies (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5070 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
- RELS 3071 - Greek and Hellenistic Religions [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5071 - Greek and Hellenistic Religions (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3071 - Greek and Hellenistic Religions [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 5071 - Greek and Hellenistic Religions (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3072 - The Birth of Christianity [AH] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5072 - The Birth of Christianity [AH] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3072 - The Birth of Christianity [AH] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 5072 - The Birth of Christianity [AH] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3076 - The Apostle Paul: Life, Letters, and Legacy (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3076 - Apostle Paul: Life, Letters, and Legacy (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3079 - Muslims and Jews: Conflict and Co-existence in the Middle East and North Africa since 1700 [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3511 - Muslims and Jews: Conflict and Co-existence in the Middle East and North Africa since 1700 [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3092 - Jesus in History, Art & Culture [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3092 - Jesus in History, Art & Culture [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3092 - Jesus in History, Art & Culture [HIS] (3.0 cr)



- RELS 3113 - History of Modern Israel/Palestine: Society, Culture, and Politics [GP] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3512 - History of Modern Israel/Palestine: Society, Culture, and Politics [GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3182 - Egypt and Western Asia: Art and Archaeology of Ancient Egypt and Western Asia [AH, GP] (3.0 cr)
or ARTH 3182 - Egypt and Western Asia: Art and Archaeology of Ancient Egypt and Western Asia [AH, GP] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3182 - Egypt and Western Asia: Art and Archaeology of Ancient Egypt and Western Asia [AH, GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3201 - The Bible: Context and Interpretation, World of the Hebrew Bible [LITR] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3201 - The Bible: Context and Interpretation, World of the Hebrew Bible [LITR] (3.0 cr)
or JWST 3201 - The Bible: Context and Interpretation, World of the Hebrew Bible [LITR] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3202 - Bible: Prophecy in Ancient Israel (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3202 - Bible: Prophecy in Ancient Israel (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3204 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or RELS 5204 - The Dead Sea Scrolls (3.0 cr)
or CNES 3204 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or CNRC 5204 - The Dead Sea Scrolls (3.0 cr)
or JWST 5204 - The Dead Sea Scrolls (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3205 - Women, Gender, and the Hebrew Bible [AH] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3205 - Women, Gender, and the Hebrew Bible [AH] (3.0 cr)
or JWST 3205 - Women, Gender, and the Hebrew Bible [AH] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3321 - American Indian Philosophies [AH, DSJ] (3.0 cr)
or AMIN 3301 - American Indian Philosophies [AH, DSJ] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3322 *{Inactive}*[AH] (3.0 cr)
or ARTH 3205 *{Inactive}*[AH] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3371 - Buddhism [GP] (3.0 cr)
or AMES 3672 - Buddhism [GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3372 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or AMES 3001 - Concepts in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3373 - Religion and Society in Imperial China [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or AMES 3373 - Religion and Society in Imperial China [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3466 - Religion and Society in Imperial China [HIS] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3377 - A Thousand Years of Buddhism in China: Beliefs, Practices, and Culture (3.0 cr)
or AMES 3377 - A Thousand Years of Buddhism in China: Beliefs, Practices, and Culture (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3415W - Art of India [AH, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)
or ARTH 3014W - Art of India [AH, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)
or AMES 3014W *{Inactive}*[AH, GP, WI] (4.0 cr)
- RELS 3502W - Ancient Israel: From Conquest to Exile [WI] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3502W - Ancient Israel: From Conquest to Exile [WI] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3502W - Ancient Israel: From Conquest to Exile [WI] (3.0 cr)
or JWST 3502W - Ancient Israel: From Conquest to Exile [WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3504 - Apocalypticism, Cosmic Warfare, and the Maccabees: Jewish Strategies of Resistance in Antiquity (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3504 - Apocalypticism, Cosmic Warfare, and the Maccabees: Jewish Strategies of Resistance in Antiquity (3.0 cr)
or JWST 3504 - Apocalypticism, Cosmic Warfare, and the Maccabees: Jewish Strategies of Resistance in Antiquity (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3520 - History of the Holocaust (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3727 - History of the Holocaust (3.0 cr)
or JWST 3520 - History of the Holocaust (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3535 - Death and the Afterlife in the Ancient World [AH] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3535 - Death and the Afterlife in the Ancient World [AH] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3541 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or CNES 3108 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
- RELS 3543 - Pagans, Christians, Barbarians: The World of Late Antiquity [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or CNRC 3617 - Pagans, Christians, Barbarians: The World of Late Antiquity [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or MEST 3617 - Pagans, Christians, Barbarians: The World of Late Antiquity [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3544W - Martyrs, Monks, Crusaders: World Christianity, 100-1400 [HIS, GP, WI] (4.0 cr)
or HIST 3081W - Martyrs, Monks, Crusaders: World Christianity, 100-1400 [HIS, GP, WI] (4.0 cr)
- RELS 3545W - World Christianity, 1300-1800 Reformers, Radicals and Revolutionaries [HIS, WI] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3082W - World Christianity, 1300-1800 Reformers, Radicals and Revolutionaries [HIS, WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3611 - Eastern Orthodoxy: History and Culture (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3767 - Eastern Orthodoxy: History and Culture (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3612 - Baroque Rome: Art and Politics in the Papal Capital [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5612 - Baroque Rome: Art and Politics in the Papal Capital (3.0 cr)
or ARTH 3335 - Baroque Rome: Art and Politics in the Papal Capital [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or ARTH 5335 - Baroque Rome: Art and Politics in the Papal Capital (3.0 cr)
- HIST 3623W - The Age of Reformation [WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3621W *{Inactive}*[WI] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5621W *{Inactive}*[WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3622 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or HIST 3802 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)



- RELS 3623 *{Inactive}*[HIS] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3804 *{Inactive}*[HIS] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3624 - Atheists as "Other": Religious and Nonreligious Outsiders in the US [DSJ] (3.0 cr)
or SOC 3309 - Atheists as "Other": Religious & Nonreligious Outsiders in the US [DSJ] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3625 - Magic and Medicine (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3285 - Magic and Medicine (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3627 - The End of the World in Literature and History [HIS] (3.0 cr)
or ENGL 3025 - The End of the World in Literature and History [HIS] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3671 - Hinduism (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5671 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or AMES 3671 - Hinduism (3.0 cr)
or AMES 5671 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
- RELS 3706W - Art of Islam [AH, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)
or ARTH 3015W - Art of Islam [AH, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3707W *{Inactive}*[SOCS, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5707W *{Inactive}*[SOCS, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)
or ANTH 3021W - Anthropology of the Middle East [SOCS, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)
or ANTH 5021W - Anthropology of the Middle East [SOCS, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3708 - The Cultures of the Silk Road (3.0 cr)
or AMES 3872 - The Cultures of the Silk Road (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3504 - The Cultures of the Silk Road (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3709 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or HIST 3503 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
- RELS 3711 - The Islamic World [SOCS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or GEOG 3145 - The Islamic World [SOCS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or GLOS 3645 *{Inactive}*[SOCS, GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3712 - Islam: Religion and Culture (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3493 - Islam: Religion and Culture (3.0 cr)
or AMES 3871 - Islam: Religion and Culture (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3713 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or HIST 3506 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
- RELS 3714 - Islam and the West (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3546 - Islam and the West (3.0 cr)
or GLOS 3643 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
- RELS 3715 - History of the Crusades [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3613 - History of the Crusades [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or MEST 3613 - History of the Crusades [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3716 - Gender and the Family in the Islamic World (3.0 cr)
or GLOS 3681 - Gender and the Family in the Islamic World (3.0 cr)
or GWSS 3681 - Gender and the Family in the Islamic World (3.0 cr)
or SOC 3681 - Gender and the Family in the Islamic World (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3717 - Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Middle Ages [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3606 - Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Middle Ages [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3718W - Christ in Islamic Thought [WI] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3494W - Christ in Islamic Thought [WI] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3721 - North Africa since 1500: Islam, Colonialism, and Independence (3.0 cr)
or RELS 5721 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or HIST 3513 - North Africa since 1500: Islam, Colonialism, and Independence (3.0 cr)
or HIST 5513 - North Africa since 1500: Islam, Colonialism, and Independence (3.0 cr)
- RELS 3722 - The Ottoman Empire [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
or HIST 3547 - The Ottoman Empire [HIS, GP] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 4049 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
or ANTH 4049 - Religion and Culture (3.0 cr)
- RELS 4309 - Religion in American Public Life: Culture, Politics, and Communities [CIV] (3.0 cr)
or SOC 4309 - Religion in American Public Life: Culture, Politics, & Communities [CIV] (3.0 cr)
- RELS 5513W *{Inactive}*[WI] (3.0 cr)
or CNES 5513W *{Inactive}*[WI] (3.0 cr)
or JWST 5513W *{Inactive}*[WI] (3.0 cr)
- HIST 5614 *{Inactive}*(3.0 cr)
- RELS 5777 - The Diversity of Traditions: Indian Empires after 1200 (3.0 cr)
or ARTH 5777 - The Diversity of Traditions: Indian Empires after 1200 (3.0 cr)

Capstone

The capstone gives majors the opportunity to research a specific topic in greater depth than is possible in a normal semester. Students should select a topic that relates to their area concentration. Students in the Text and Traditions option should include a language/translation component in their project. Projects are developed independently under supervision of a faculty advisor selected



by the student.

The program strongly recommends that students complete RELS 3001W at least one semester before enrolling in RELS 4952. Enroll in RELS 4952 for 4 credits, or enroll in RELS 4952 concurrent with an advisor-approved upper-division course for a combined 4 credits. Students who double major within CLA and choose to complete the capstone requirement in their other major may waive the Religious Studies BA capstone, but they do need to replace the 3 credits with another upper-division RELS elective.

Take 1 - 2 course(s) totaling exactly 4 credit(s) from the following:

RELS 4952 (4.0 cr)

RELS 4952 *{Inactive}*(1.0 - 4.0 cr)

or **RELS 4952 (1.0 cr) + Advisor-approved Upper-Division Course (3.0 cr)**

RELS 4952 *{Inactive}*(1.0 - 4.0 cr)

with advisor-approved upper-division course (3.0 cr)

Upper Division Writing Intensive within the major

Students are required to take one upper division writing intensive course within the major. If that requirement has not been satisfied within the core major requirements, students must choose one course from the following list. Some of these courses may also fulfill other major requirements.

Take 0 - 1 course(s) from the following:

•**RELS 3001W** - Theory and Method in Religion: Critical Approaches to the Study of Religion [WI] (3.0 cr)

•**RELS 3626W** - Witches, Seers, and Saints: Women, Gender, and Religion in the U.S. [WI] (3.0 cr)

•**RELS 3013W** - Biblical Law and Jewish Ethics [WI] (3.0 cr)

or **RELS 5013W** - Biblical Law and Jewish Ethics [WI] (3.0 cr)

or **JWST 5013W** - Biblical Law and Jewish Ethics [WI] (3.0 cr)

•**RELS 3621W** *{Inactive}*[WI] (3.0 cr)

or **RELS 5621W** *{Inactive}*[WI] (3.0 cr)

•**RELS 3706W** - Art of Islam [AH, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)

or **ARTH 3015W** - Art of Islam [AH, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)

•**RELS 3707W** *{Inactive}*[SOCS, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)

or **RELS 5707W** *{Inactive}*[SOCS, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)

or **ANTH 3021W** - Anthropology of the Middle East [SOCS, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)

or **ANTH 5021W** - Anthropology of the Middle East [SOCS, GP, WI] (3.0 cr)

Program Sub-plans

Students are required to complete one of the following sub-plans.

Track I: Religion, Culture, and Society

This track is designed to meet the needs of students who wish to study religion broadly and pursue a highly contextualized investigation of religion as a social and cultural force. It serves students who are drawn to the methodologies of the humanities, social sciences, and the arts. It serves students who are motivated by questions of expression, psychology, religious thought and practice, as well as public and social policy, and the political contexts and ramifications of religion. It prepares students for many careers serving diverse communities in public arenas, as well as for graduate study in the arts, humanities, or social sciences.

Students in this sub-plan have developed concentrations in many areas, including religion, human rights, and social justice; religion and gender; religion and politics in the U.S.; religion and art, religion in the U.S.; Muslim, Christian, and Jewish relations; religious violence, and many others. Students should consult with the major advisor as they develop their concentration.

This sub-plan is completed by taking 8 Electives within the core of the major, see instructions above. Final clearance by the major advisor is required.

Track II: Texts and Traditions

This track is designed for students interested in gaining in-depth knowledge of a particular religious tradition by studying the untranslated foundational texts of the chosen tradition. This track prepares students for many careers serving diverse communities in public arenas, as well as for graduate study in a variety of fields or seminary programs. It is particularly recommended for students seeking in depth study of Judaism, Islam, or Christianity; or the study of the traditions and texts of the religions of South or East Asia, whether in their countries of origin or in diaspora.

This track requires that students gain proficiency in a language appropriate to the specific religious tradition and its sources. Students must complete at least one course at the fourth semester or beyond with a grade of C- or better. Language selection must be approved by the major advisor. Sample pairings include, but are not limited to, the following:

American Indian religions: Ojibwe or Dakota

Religions of Asia: Chinese, Japanese, Sanskrit*, Hindi, Urdu

Christianity: Greek or Latin (for scriptural or medieval concentration), German or Spanish (for relevant geographical/cultural themes)

Islam: Arabic, Persian*, Turkish*



Judaism: Hebrew (for scriptural or historical area of concentration), German or Yiddish* (e.g., for Jewish literature or 20th-century)

*Sanskrit, Persian, Turkish, and Yiddish are not taught on campus, but they are available through CourseShare. Contact the CLA Language Center for more information.

This sub-plan is completed by taking 6 Electives within the core of the major, and fulfilling the language proficiency requirement below. Final clearance by the major advisor is required.

Language Proficiency

The amount of credits required for this requirement will depend on a student's placement in the language tied to the Area Concentration.

Take 1 - 4 course(s) totaling 3 - 22 credit(s) from the following:

- Fourth semester language or higher (at least 3 cr)