

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (BA)

Department Website (<http://as.nyu.edu/religiousstudies/>)

NYSED: 08296 HEGIS: 1510.00 CIP: 38.0201

Program Description

The Department of Religious Studies explores religious practice as an important aspect of social life in three ways. First, students study the theories and methods through which religion is analyzed today, including psychological, sociological, anthropological, philosophical, historical, legal, and literary approaches. They also approach the study of “religion” as a concept, which has itself been an intellectual object of inquiry and has played a key role in the development of the social and human sciences. Second, students learn empirically about religion in different times and places, either through historical or ethnographic study, using textual, visual, and audio sources. Third, students use religions, approached as lived practices, as a lens for examining other realms in social life, such as gender and sexuality, race, the nation-state, violence, memory, ethics, emotions, politics, economy, power, art, literature, and media. These realms, in turn, have an impact on religions. The Department of Religious Studies is closely affiliated with the Center for Religion and Media. It should be stressed that the department is oriented toward the academic analysis of religious phenomena and does not promote or endorse either religious belief itself or the views and practices of any particular religious tradition.

Honors Program

Any Religious Studies major who has a major and cumulative GPA of 3.65 or above may apply for the department's honors program. Honors students must complete the required eight 4-credit courses (32 credits) for the Religious Studies major plus 8 additional credits of Independent Study (RELST-UA 997 Independent Study, RELST-UA 998 Independent Study) to produce an honors thesis of around 30 pages.

These Independent Study courses are taken in the fall and spring terms of senior year with one professor within the core religious studies faculty. A minimum grade of B+ must be maintained both semesters for eligibility to receive honors. Students must discuss their topics in advance with the professor, who must agree to this 8-credit commitment. If a professor is going to be on leave one of the terms, special arrangements must be made with them to carry out this commitment from afar, or students must choose someone else. We recommend that students choose a faculty member with whom they have already taken a course and a topic that allows them to build upon and deepen a basis of knowledge already acquired.

In order to apply, students must print and complete this Honors Form (<https://as.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu-as/religious/documents/Declaration%20of%20Honors%20Form.pdf>) and provide a proposed syllabus, designed in conjunction with the faculty adviser, which details a timeline of commitments and deadlines and is signed by both the student and the faculty adviser by April of the junior year. Accepted students receive an access code to register for Independent Study in the senior year.

Admissions

New York University's Office of Undergraduate Admissions supports the application process for all undergraduate programs at NYU. For additional information about undergraduate admissions, including application

requirements, see How to Apply (<https://www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/how-to-apply.html>).

Program Requirements

The major in Religious Studies requires eight 4-credit courses (32 credits) completed with a grade of C or better (courses graded Pass/Fail do not count) as outlined below.

Course	Title	Credits
General Education Requirements		
First-Year Seminar		4
EXPOS-UA 1	Writing as Inquiry	4
Foreign Language ¹		16
Quantitative Reasoning		4
Physical Science		4
Life Science		4
Texts and Ideas		4
Cultures and Contexts		4
Societies and the Social Sciences		4
Major Requirements		
RELST-UA 1	Theories & Methods in The Study of Religion (offered only in the fall semester)	4
RELST-UA 15	Advanced Seminar: (Comparative Topics in the Study of Religion) (usually offered only in the spring semester)	4
Select six additional courses in religious studies		24
Electives		
Other Elective Credits		48
Total Credits		128

¹ The foreign language requirement is satisfied upon successful completion through the Intermediate level of a language. This may be accomplished in fewer than 16 credits, but those credits must then be completed as elective credit.

Note: Majors are expected to outline completion of religious studies core requirements and design a coherent plan of study (which may, with permission, include courses outside the Religious Studies curriculum) in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies.

Sample Plan of Study

Course	Title	Credits
1st Semester/Term		
RELST-UA 1	Theories & Methods in The Study of Religion	4
Foreign Language		4
Texts and Ideas		4
First-Year Seminar		4
Credits		16
2nd Semester/Term		
Major Requirements		4
Foreign Language		4
Cultures and Contexts		4
EXPOS-UA 1	Writing as Inquiry	4
Credits		16
3rd Semester/Term		
Major Requirements		4
Foreign Language		4

Quantitative Reasoning	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Credits	16
4th Semester/Term	
Major Requirements	4
Foreign Language	4
Societies and the Social Sciences	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Credits	16
5th Semester/Term	
Major Requirements	4
Physical Science	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Credits	16
6th Semester/Term	
Major Requirements	4
Life Science	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Credits	16
7th Semester/Term	
Major Requirements	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Credits	16
8th Semester/Term	
RELST-UA 15	Advanced Seminar: 4
Other Elective Credits	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Other Elective Credits	4
Credits	16
Total Credits	128

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of program requirements, students are expected to have acquired:

1. An introductory knowledge of the methods of inquiry of the discipline, its theories and concepts, and the primary critical issues addressed by scholars in the field.
2. Proficiency in oral and written communication appropriate to the discipline and to the humanities in general.
3. Ability to read, interpret, and analyze historical and present-day sources about religion and related topics.

Policies

NYU Policies

University-wide policies can be found on the New York University Policy pages (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/nyu/policies/>).

College of Arts and Science Policies

A full list of relevant academic policies can be found on the CAS Academic Policies page (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/undergraduate/arts-science/academic-policies/>).