Religious Studies

The study of religion challenges students to explore their own values and understandings of life, exposes them to the various ways that people in differing cultures and time periods have expressed religious beliefs and practices, and helps them examine the importance of religion in culture. Because every culture, both past and present, is strongly shaped by religious beliefs and practices, an appreciation of the religious dimension of human existence is essential for a well-educated individual. Pursuing a major or minor in religious studies allows students to explore the most important questions and issues for human society, while simultaneously learning the critical thinking and communication skills that will be important for success in whatever vocation they choose.

More information can be found online at http://www.stetson.edu/academics/programs/religious-studies.php.

Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes describe what students know, understand and are able to do as a result of completing a degree program. The learning outcomes for this program are:

1. Explain more than one religious tradition and describe the phenomena of religion comparatively across and within cultures
2. Critically interpret the sacred texts of one or more world religions
3. Critically evaluate the interplay of religion and human culture, including issues of ethical and social justice
4. Apply critical research methodology appropriate to the field of Religion.
5. Conduct and present research in written form
6. Orally communicate and defend the results and conclusions of their research

Majors

Major in Religious Studies
• Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies (http://catalog.stetson.edu/archived-catalogs/2017-2018/undergraduate/arts-sciences/religious/religious-studies-ba)

Minors

Minor in Religious Studies - 4 units

Requirements
One of the following 100-level courses:

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<th>Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 100B</td>
<td>Introduction to Biblical Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 103B</td>
<td>Religions of the East</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 107B</td>
<td>Introduction to Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 108B</td>
<td>Christian Thought and Doctrine</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 109B</td>
<td>Sacred Traditions of the World</td>
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Three units of RELS electives, of which at least one must be a 300- or 400-level one-unit course. No more than one unit total may come from travel courses with the pass/fail election, teaching apprenticeships (RELS 395), and internships (RELS 397)

Select one non-credit course:

<table>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 380</td>
<td>Department Colloquium</td>
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<tr>
<td>or RELS 480</td>
<td>Department Colloquium</td>
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Total Units 4

Advising Course Plans

Advising Course Plans
• Religious Studies Major (http://catalog.stetson.edu/archived-catalogs/2017-2018/undergraduate/arts-sciences/religious/4year_plan)
• Religious Studies Major (http://catalog.stetson.edu/archived-catalogs/2017-2018/undergraduate/arts-sciences/religious/3year_plan) - Three-Year Plan

Faculty

Bell, Christopher
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, 2013
B.A., M.A., Florida State University
Ph.D., University of Virginia

Lucas, Phillip C.
Professor of Religious Studies, 1992
B.A., Portland State University
M.A., Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara

Queen-Sutherland, Kandy
Professor of Religious Studies, 1991
Sam R. Marks Chair of Religion, 2005
B.S., Winthrop College
M.Div., Ph.D., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Reddish, Mitchell G.
Professor of Religious Studies and Chair, 1983
O. L. Walker Chair of Christian Studies, 2000
B.A., University of Georgia
M.Div., Ph.D., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Sapp, D. Gregory
Associate Professor of Religious Studies, 2006
Hal S. Marchman Chair of Civic and Social Responsibility, 2006
B.A., Stetson University
M.Div., Princeton Theological Seminary
M.A., Ph.D., University of Virginia

Sutherland, D. Dixon
Professor of Religious Studies, 1991
B.A., Samford University
M.Div., Th.M., Ph.D., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Courses

RELS 100B. Introduction to Biblical Literature. 1 Unit.
A study of the contents and development of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament, with emphasis on critical methods for biblical study, the influence of the cultures of the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean worlds on the Bible, the formative traditions of Judaism and Christianity, and the interpretation of biblical texts.

RELS 103B. Religions of the East. 1 Unit.
An introduction to the beliefs and practices of the religions of the East, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Shinto. By tracing the historical development of these religious traditions and studying the scriptures, doctrines, rituals, ethics, and social institutions, students enter into the worldview of the East.

RELS 107B. Introduction to Judaism. 1 Unit.
Examines the development of Judaism from its ancient biblical beginnings to the creation of the modern state of Israel. The course includes a study of rituals, practices, and literature of Judaism. Special attention is given to the role of the Holocaust and Diaspora in Jewish history.

RELS 108B. Christian Thought and Doctrine. 1 Unit.
A study of the development of Christian theologies and doctrines from their roots in Judaism and Greco-Roman philosophies to contemporary understandings. Special attention is given to the development of Christian beliefs as seen in Christian scripture and later writings.

RELS 109B. Sacred Traditions of the World. 1 Unit.
An introduction to prehistoric religions, new religions, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, with attention to scriptures, rituals, ethics, and alternative conceptions of human nature, enlightenment, community life, divinity, gender norms, and life after death.

RELS 110. Elementary New Testament Greek. 1 Unit.
An introductory study of the written Greek language of the New Testament period. Emphasis is on grammar and vocabulary, leading to translation of selected texts from the Greek New Testament.

RELS 111. Elementary Biblical Hebrew. 1 Unit.
An introductory study of classical biblical Hebrew. This course concentrates on basic Hebrew vocabulary and grammar, thus preparing the student to translate various readings from the Hebrew Bible.

RELS 168A. The Bible in Art and Artifact. 1 Unit.
A course that includes optional spring break travel and has two primary aims: (1) to examine artifacts from the ancient Near Eastern world and the Mediterranean world that have a connection to biblical studies, and (2) to study art works in major museums that portray scenes from the Bible. In addition to classroom study of these objects, the course includes optional travel during spring break to major world museums (such as the British Museum, the National Gallery of Art in London, the Louvre, and the Orsay) to examine these objects first-hand.
that was also based on religion.

leaders who were, primarily, religious leaders to understand the religious force driving the Movement. We will also consider opposition to the Movement.

An introduction to the role that religion played in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. Students will study the ideas of Movement

structures, goals, and experiences of the religious and then consider how those characteristics are also found in sport.

An introduction to the ways in which religion and sport share commonalities in form and experiences. Students develop an understanding of the basic

methods of interpretation. Texts that suppress the power of the feminine are examined against those that bring to light positive images. The influence of

This course focuses on Stetson's Human Diversity Value. An examination of the role that gender plays in the biblical texts, giving attention to feminist

traditions to ethical issues, and specific contemporary issues for which the Bible has been used.

A study of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic writings, both biblical writings (primarily Daniel and Revelation) and non-biblical texts, culminating in an

examination of the extensive use of apocalyptic ideas and imagery in American culture (art, music, literature, movies, religious beliefs).

This course focuses on Stetson's Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. A critical inquiry into the complexities and challenges of using the Bible to make

An exploration of Christianity in terms of five essential dimensions: prophetic, ethical, revelatory, monotheistic, and historical dimensions. Students learn

complexities of the development of each dimension during the formative centuries of the church, as well as alternative understandings that competed

examines the relationship between ritual, myth, and symbolism in the creation and function of art. The course also encourages students to examine critically the relationship between ritual, myth, and symbolism in the creation and function of art.

An exploration of the sacred aesthetic in the religions of Asia. Through a combination of lectures, discussions, films, and field trips, students learn how

art is used effectively to express deep religious concepts and principles, while serving to inspire, reform, and educate the religious believer. The course

An examination of religious traditions of East Asia, including Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Shinto. The course traces the historical development

of these traditions and considers the lived experience of believers in the modern world. Students explore religious scriptures, doctrines, rituals, ethics,
social institutions, spiritualities, and art and consider alternative conceptions of human nature, enlightenment, community life, divinity, gender roles, and

life after death.

A study of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic writings, both biblical writings (primarily Daniel and Revelation) and non-biblical texts, culminating in an

examination of the extensive use of apocalyptic ideas and imagery in American culture (art, music, literature, movies, religious beliefs).

This course focuses on Stetson's Human Diversity Value. An examination of the role that gender plays in the biblical texts, giving attention to feminist

methods of interpretation. Texts that suppress the power of the feminine are examined against those that bring to light positive images. The influence of

these texts both in establishing traditional roles for women historically and in shaping patriarchal theologies in our contemporary world is investigated.

An introduction to three major religious traditions originating in India including Hinduism, Sikhism, and Jainism. Student explore the variety of religious

experiences available in India by studying and comparing the basic historical, philosophical, spiritual, sociological, ritual, and mythical dimensions of

these traditions.

A travel course, providing a study of major historical, archaeological, and religious (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim) sites in selected countries of the

Middle East, such as Israel, Jordan, and Egypt. The major focus of the course is on the ancient world.

A travel course, providing a study of major historical, archaeological, and religious sites in selected Mediterranean countries, such as Italy, Greece, and

Turkey. The major focus of the course is on the ancient world.

An introduction to the ways in which religion and sport share commonalities in form and experiences. Students develop an understanding of the basic

structures, goals, and experiences of the religious and then consider how those characteristics are also found in sport.

An introduction to the role that religion played in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. Students will study the ideas of Movement

leaders who were, primarily, religious leaders to understand the religious force driving the Movement. We will also consider opposition to the Movement

that was also based on religion.
REL 281V. Moral Reflections on the Holocaust. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson’s Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An examination of the theological and ethical questions raised by the Holocaust, which saw the murder of six million Jews and five million non-Jews between the years 1933 and 1945. The course evaluates contemporary philosophical, ethical, and theological responses to the Holocaust, addressing such topics as the absence of God, religious faith in a post-Holocaust stage, and the problem of evil and suffering.

REL 282B. The American Jewish Experience. 1 Unit.
An exploration of the unique experience of Jews in America. Immigrant biographies and personal reflections, together with journals and historical records, are studied in order to understand both early and contemporary "American Jewish life" as a dynamic phenomenon that has adapted to a variety of social and cultural challenges.

REL 285. Independent Study. 0.5 or 1 Units.
This course is initiated by student interest and contingent upon the expertise of current departmental faculty. Students may take more than one REL 285, REL 385, or RELS 485 course during their career with different titles and content.

REL 290. Special Topics in Religious Studies. 1 Unit.
Varied subject matter according to the interests and expertise of faculty. May be taken more than once for credit.

REL 302V. American Christian Experience. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson’s Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An examination of the history, beliefs, and practices of significant Christian churches in the United States, including the Puritans, Baptists, Quakers, Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox and Pentecostals. The course also explores controversial ethical issues in the historical development of American Christian churches.

REL 305B. Shapers of Christian Thought. 1 Unit.
An introduction to individuals whose ideas and writings have influenced the formation and development of Christian thought, such as Plato, Pelagius, Augustine, and Anselm. May be taken more than once for credit.

REL 307V. Varieties of American Religion. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson’s Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. This course focuses on sectarian, minority, and new religious movements (NRMS) in the United States. Students examine the teachings and practices of groups such as the Mormons, Asian-inspired NRMs, the Branch Davidians, UFO churches, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and contemporary Pagan religions. Students also analyze critical ethical issues such as government intervention in new and minority religions, "revolutionary suicide," charismatic leadership, and coercive "deprogramming" of NRM members.

REL 309. Hebrew Festival Scrolls. 1 Unit.
An examination of the five festival scrolls of the Hebrew Bible: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. Attention is given to historical context, literary analysis, theological implications, and history of usage within Jewish and Christian contexts for each of the five writings.

REL 311H. The Dead Sea Scrolls. 1 Unit.
A study of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, their contents, the community that produced them, the historical events that shaped the origin and development of the community, and the continuing significance of these Jewish writings.

REL 313V. Prophets of Social Justice. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson’s Social Justice Value. An examination of the call for social justice found in the Hebrew prophets and the appropriation of their message by voices for liberation. Modern calls for social justice are examined against biblical demands.

REL 316V. In Search of Jesus. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson’s Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An examination of major historical and theological questions surrounding Jesus of Nazareth. How reliable are the accounts in the New Testament gospels? What were his teachings and beliefs? How were the Jesus traditions shaped by the early Christian communities and the gospel writers? The course also explores how various ancient and modern portrayals of Jesus are shaped by individual and cultural expectations. Junior Seminar.

REL 317V. The Gospels. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson’s Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. A study of the life and teachings of Jesus as presented in the four gospels in the New Testament. This course gives major attention to the differences among the gospel accounts and the emphases of the individual gospel writers.

REL 318V. Life and Letters of Paul. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson’s Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. A study of one of the most important figures in the history of Christianity - Paul of Tarsus. The course includes an examination of the life and background of Paul and an investigation of the purpose and content of his letters.

REL 331B. Islam: Religion of the Prophet. 1 Unit.
An examination of Islam’s history, theology, rituals, spirituality, social organization, scriptures, art, and its cultural and political expressions in the modern world.

REL 332. Asian Philosophy. 1 Unit.
An introduction to the philosophical foundations of Asian thought. Students gain an understanding of key schools and philosophers of Indian and East-Asian philosophy. Emphasis is given to comparing ideas of selfhood, divinity, salvation, community, and ethics found in different Eastern philosophical systems.
RELS 334V. Buddhism: The Middle Way. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An examination of the history, philosophy, rituals, mythology, and art of Buddhism. Beginning with the life of the Buddha, the course traces the development of Buddhism in India and its transplantation to other parts of Asia. Schools studied include Tibetan Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, and American forms of Buddhism. The course also discusses the complex interaction between Buddhism and Hinduism.

RELS 335V. Religion and Violence in Asia. 1 Unit.
This course will examine instances across Asia where religion and violence intersect. Through the lens of conflict, this course will examine traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Confucianism, Daoism, and Shinto. The goal of the course will be to dispel stereotypes concerning religious violence and to explore the religious arguments used to justify violence.

RELS 336B. Society and the Supernatural in Asia. 1 Unit.
An exploration of literary and folkloric accounts of the supernatural in several Asian milieus. Students will explore beliefs about Indian demons, Chinese fox spirits, and Japanese ghosts, and examine how these beliefs are shaped by history and religious traditions. Major themes will include family life, religious specialists, and community activities, all of which respond to the threat or promise of the supernatural in various ways.

RELS 337B. The Religion and Culture of Hinduism. 1 Unit.
A study of the religious life and practices of Hindus, examining the pre-Aryan roots of Hinduism, the philosophy of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita, the mythology and iconography of key Hindu gods and goddesses, primary modes of Hindu worship and devotion, and emerging forms of Hinduism in America.

RELS 339V. Women in Asia. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Human Diversity Value. An introduction to key thinkers and movements in the field of gender studies. The course encourages students to consider how the issues raised by these thinkers relate to the lives of women in Asia. This course also examines how religious phenomena (symbols, ritual, narrative, text) relate to ‘genderedness’—to people’s experiences as females and males.

RELS 341B. The Idea of the Devil. 1 Unit.
An exploration of the origins of the idea of a supreme, evil being and the various shapes that idea has taken from ancient Zoroastrianism to contemporary Christianity.

RELS 344B. Religion and American Politics. 1 Unit.
An exploration of the ideologies of the founders of the United States with regard to the relationship of religion and public policy. Students reflect critically on that relationship and consider the proper role of religion in politics in contemporary culture, addressing such issues as school vouchers, stem-cell research, same-sex marriage, and religious affiliation of candidates for political office.

RELS 352V. Nature, the Sacred, and Ethics. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An investigation of religious traditions about nature and their relevance for developing an ecological ethic. Central to this study is an understanding of the significant relationship between particular religious views and an ethic of the natural world. Also included is inquiry about concepts of the sacred in connection to nature, as well as conflicts and connections with science.

RELS 358V. Frontiers in Bioethics. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An investigation of contemporary ethical issues about human life: How ought we to define life? When does it begin and end? Should we technologically assist reproduction? Should we select the sex of our children? Should we allow humans to be cloned? Should we use stem cells to repair the body? Should we genetically engineer humans? This inquiry will necessitate the integration of multiple fields of inquiry, especially biology, philosophy, religion, and law. Junior Seminar.

RELS 362V. Religion and Human Rights. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Social Justice Value. An exploration of the relationship between religious traditions across cultures and the theory and practice of human rights. Students examine the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the debates concerning the concept of human rights in different cultural settings. Students pay close attention to the ways that religious traditions can both protect and endanger universal human rights. Junior Seminar.

RELS 365B. Mary, Max, and Mozart: Religion and European Culture. 1 Unit.
This course examines the interplay of religion and culture within Europe and particularly Austria. Participants consider the impact of the Grail Legends, the cult of Mary, and the Reformation and Counter Reformation on Medieval Tyrol, and visit several relevant sites. The music of Mozart and Wagner, challengers to National Socialism, and current post-war efforts at restitution and reconciliation are also discussed. A summer Innsbruck study abroad course.

RELS 370. Methods and Theories in the Study of Religion. 1 Unit.
An examination of the scholarly attempts to understand, describe, and relate to the sacred. Attention is given to critical methods of social science, philosophy, theology, history, textual studies, and phenomenology. The course also focuses on preparation for the senior research project. Prerequisites: Restricted to majors; Junior standing. Writing enhanced course. Offered every fall semester.

RELS 380. Department Colloquium. 0.0 Units.
Pass/Fail only. A critical examination of current developments in religious studies. Prerequisite: RELS major or minor. Offered every fall semester.

RELS 385. Independent Study. 0.5 or 1 Units.
This course is initiated by student interest and contingent upon the expertise of current departmental faculty. Students may take more than one RELS 285, RELS 385, or RELS 485 course during their career with different titles and content.
RELS 390. Special Topics in Religious Studies. 1 Unit.
Varied subject matter according to the interests and expertise of faculty. May be taken more than once for credit.

RELS 390V. Law and Ethics in Islam. 1 Unit.
This course will examine a range of ethical approaches and perspectives within the historic and modern Islamic tradition, with a particular emphasis on Islamic law. After surveying early developments in the fields of law, theology, philosophy, and mysticism, we will then explore responses within the Islamic tradition to such contemporary issues as secularism, human rights, war and peace, and feminism. This course focuses on Stetson's social Justice Value.

RELS 395. Teaching Apprenticeship. 0.5 Units.
Pass/Fail only. Provides an opportunity for select religious studies majors or minors to work closely with a faculty member in planning, teaching, and evaluating a lower-division course. The student also pursues independent study in the subject matter of the course. Prerequisite: junior or senior status and permission of the department chair. May be repeated once.

RELS 397. Internship in Religious Studies. 0.5 or 1 Units.
Pass/Fail only. Through placement in an approved setting such as a religious institution, a non-profit organization, or a social-service agency, students will have an opportunity to enrich their classroom knowledge with experience in religious, ethical, or social justice issues. Typically, full unit internships require 140 hours for the semester. Specific requirements will be presented by way of a contract signed by the student. Requirements may include a journal, research paper, or appropriate work product, and a letter of evaluation from the site supervisor. Prerequisites: permission of department chair and instructor, religious studies major or minor, successful completion of two courses in religious studies, and junior or senior status. May be repeated for credit, but a maximum of one credit may be applied to the major or minor. Enrollment in an internship course requires students to attend an orientation prior to beginning work at their internship site. For more information regarding internship orientations, please contact Career & Professional Development at career@stetson.edu or 386-822-7315.

RELS 412V. Envisioning the Psalms. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An introduction to the world of the psalmists, examining the prayers and laments of ancient Israel. The images and metaphors of the psalms are explored in order to comprehend the world view behind the texts. Students explore how both ancient and modern readers find instruction, prayer, and praise in the poetry of the psalms.

RELS 415. Alternative Scriptures: Jewish and Christian Noncanonical Texts. 1 Unit.
A study of early Jewish and Christian writings that are not included in all Jewish and Christian Bibles. Texts that will be studied include works from the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Nag Hammadi writings, and the New Testament Apocrypha. The course will also examine the process of canonization, the reasons why certain works were excluded, and the value of noncanonical writings.

RELS 435V. Spiritualities East and West. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An examination of the perennial human striving across cultures to communicate with, worship, and enter into an intimate relationship with the sacred. Students explore Roman Catholic spirituality, Pentecostal worship, Jewish Kabbalah, Islamic Sufism, the New Spirituality movement, Nature Spirituality, Hindu spirituality, Tibetan Buddhist meditation, and Zen Buddhism.

RELS 446V. Slaves, Whores, and Poors: Religion and Oppression. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Social Justice Value. An examination of both historical and contemporary events and movements shaped by the interplay of religion with race-gender-class issues. Topics include the marginalization of humans along race, gender, and class lines, justified by traditions of religious domination and oppression. Equally significant are religious voices that challenge these traditions, resulting in calls for liberation, freedom, and equality.

RELS 459V. The Ethics of Mortality. 1 Unit.
This course focuses on Stetson's Ethical or Spiritual Inquiry Value. An inquiry into the religious ethics of death and dying. Students study different religious traditions with regard to their attitudes toward definitions of death, termination of treatment, and actively causing death. Secular challenges to religious involvement are also included.

RELS 480. Department Colloquium. 0.0 Units.
Pass/Fail only. A critical examination of current developments in religious studies. Prerequisite: RELS major or minor. Offered every fall semester.

RELS 485. Independent Study. 0.5 or 1 Units.
This course is initiated by student interest and contingent upon the expertise of current departmental faculty. Students may take more than one RELS 285, RELS 385, or RELS 485 course during their career with different titles and content.

RELS 490. Special Topics in Religious Studies. 1 Unit.
Varied subject matter according to the interests and expertise of faculty. May be taken more than once for credit.

RELS 499. Senior Project. 1 Unit.
Directed, independent research, culminating in a major research paper and an oral presentation. It is a capstone course in which the student demonstrates her/his research, critical thinking, and communication skills. Prerequisites: RELS 370, senior status, and permission of the department chair. Writing enhanced course.