

RELIGIOUS STUDIES - BACHELOR OF ARTS (BA)

The curriculum in the Department of Religious Studies at CU Boulder trains students in the scholarly understanding and interpretation of the complex phenomenon we call religion through careful study of history, texts, rituals, narrative, art and media. The program offers the skills to approach the comparative study of religion with the option of gaining deeper knowledge in Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, religions in America, religions in the Mediterranean, religions in Asia and several indigenous traditions. The program also allows students to develop expertise in thematic areas such as religion and the body; ritual studies; religion and the environment; ethics, politics and law; religion, gender, and sexuality; and ancient and medieval religions.

The undergraduate degree in religious studies emphasizes the application of various theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religion; the understanding of religious practices and traditions with attention to historical context and present-day impact; and the development of media literacy, critical thinking, effective oral and written communication, and research skills in our increasingly globalized and religiously diverse world.

In addition, students with a degree in religious studies are expected to achieve basic religious literacy: the ability to communicate and analyze practical information regarding religious diversity as educated citizens of a pluralistic society and thereby to effectively understand and participate in public debates and discussions about religion.

Graduation with Honors

The Honors Program in religious studies offers the opportunity for highly motivated undergraduates to undertake a deeper and more individualized study than is provided by the regular BA curriculum and to earn an honors designation on their diploma. Religious studies majors with at least a 3.30 overall GPA and 3.50 in the major are eligible to participate in the program. Honors that may be earned are cum laude (with honors), magna cum laude (with high honors) and summa cum laude (with highest honors).

Students interested in pursuing departmental honors are encouraged to consult with the departmental undergraduate advisor by the beginning of their junior year.

Requirements

Program Requirements

Students must complete the general requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences and, in addition:

- Complete a minimum of 36 credit hours in the major, of which at least 27 credits hours must be in RLST designated courses.
- More than half of the credit hours (19 or greater) counted toward the major need to be in upper-division courses.
- All courses counted towards the major must be completed with a grade of C- or better and none of the courses may be taken for a Pass/Fail grade.
- The cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) in courses counted toward the major must be at least 2.0.

Required Courses and Credits

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Academic Study of Religion Requirement		
RLST 1620	Religious Dimensions of Human Experience	3
RLST 4830	Senior Majors Seminar	3
Cluster Requirement		
<i>Select three courses in either of the following:</i>		9
A single religious tradition (i.e. Buddhism, Christianity, East Asian Religions, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Native American and Indigenous Religions)		
A particular theme (i.e. ancient and medieval religions, gender and sexuality, interreligious interactions, law and politics, media, culture, and contemporary society, philosophy and ethics, religion and violence, ritual, performance, and the body)		
Electives		21
Total Credit Hours		36

Graduating in Four Years

Consult the Four-Year Guarantee Requirements for information on eligibility. The concept of "adequate progress" as it is used here only refers to maintaining eligibility for the four-year guarantee; it is not a requirement for the major. To maintain adequate progress in religious studies, students should meet the following requirements:

- At the beginning of the second semester of study, declare the major.
- Each semester, complete two religious studies courses.
- The last spring semester in residence, take the senior seminar.

Recommended Four-Year Plan of Study

Through the required coursework for the major, students will fulfill all 12 credits of the Arts & Humanities area of the Gen Ed Distribution Requirement and possibly could fill one or both of the categories of the Gen Ed Diversity Requirement (U.S. and/or Global Perspective.)

Year One

Fall Semester		Credit Hours
RLST 1620	Religious Dimensions of Human Experience	3
Gen. Ed. Skills course (example: Lower-division Written Communication)		3
Gen. Ed. Distribution course (example: Natural Sciences with Lab)		4
Elective		3
Elective		3
Credit Hours		16
Spring Semester		
RLST Major Elective		3
Gen. Ed. Skills course (example: QRMS)		3
Gen. Ed. Distribution course (example: Natural Sciences)		3
Elective		3
Elective		3
Credit Hours		15

Year Two**Fall Semester**

RLST Major Elective Lower or Upper-division	3
Gen. Ed. Distribution course (example: Natural Sciences)	3
Gen. Ed. Distribution/Diversity course (example: Social Sciences/US Perspective)	3
Elective	3
Elective	3
Credit Hours	15

Spring Semester

RLST Major Elective Lower or Upper-division	3
Gen. Ed. Distribution course (example: Natural Sciences)	3
Elective	3
Elective	3
Elective	3
Credit Hours	15

Year Three**Fall Semester**

RLST Upper-division Major Elective	3
RLST Cluster course Lower or Upper-division	3
Gen. Ed. Skills course (example: Upper-division Written Communication)	3
Gen. Ed. Distribution/ Diversity course (example: Social Sciences/Global Perspective)	3
Elective or Upper-division Elective (if needed)	3
Credit Hours	15

Spring Semester

RLST Upper-Division Major Elective	3
RLST Cluster course - Upper-Division	3
Gen. Ed. Distribution course (example: Social Sciences)	3
Upper-division Elective	3
Upper-division Elective	3
Credit Hours	15

Year Four**Fall Semester**

RLST Upper-Division Major Elective	3
RLST Cluster course - Upper-Division	3
Gen. Ed. Distribution course (example: Social Sciences)	3
Upper-division Elective	3
Upper-division Elective	3
Credit Hours	15

Spring Semester

RLST 4830 Senior Majors Seminar	3
RLST Upper-Division Major Elective	3
Upper-division Elective	3
Upper-division Elective	3
Upper-division Elective	3
Credit Hours	15
Total Credit Hours	121

Bachelor's–Accelerated Master's Degree Program(s)

The bachelor's–accelerated master's (BAM) degree program options offer currently enrolled CU Boulder undergraduate students the opportunity to receive a bachelor's and master's degree in a shorter period of time. Students receive the bachelor's degree first but begin taking graduate coursework as undergraduates (typically in their senior year).

Because some courses are allowed to double count for both the bachelor's and the master's degrees, students receive a master's degree in less time and at a lower cost than if they were to enroll in a stand-alone master's degree program after completion of their baccalaureate degree. In addition, staying at CU Boulder to pursue a bachelor's–accelerated master's program enables students to continue working with their established faculty mentors.

BA and MA in Religious Studies

Admissions Requirements

In order to gain admission to the BAM program named above, a student must meet the following criteria:

- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Transfer students must have completed a minimum of 24 credit hours at CU Boulder.
- Students must have completed 24 RLST credit hours with a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Program Requirements

Students may take up to and including 12 hours while in the undergraduate program which can later be used toward the master's degree. However, only 6 credits may be double counted toward the bachelor's degree and the master's degree. Students must apply to graduate with the bachelor's degree, and apply to continue with the master's degree, early in the semester in which the undergraduate requirements will be completed.

If you are interested in the BAM degree program, please contact the graduate program assistant for more information.

Learning Outcomes

By the completion of the program, students will be able to:

- Develop competency of knowledge about the historical and global diversity of religious ideas, practices, movements and dimensions of cultures.
- Identify, analyze and apply major concepts and theories in the academic study of religion to historical and contemporary issues.
- Communicate knowledge about the historical and global diversity of religious ideas, practices, movements and dimensions of cultures through effective writing.