Religion is one of the creative expressions of the human spirit, and a primary motivator of human actions. It has shaped, and been shaped by, many other forms of human activity including politics, intellectual movements, the arts, medicine and healing, and social behavior. The academic study of religion, therefore, is undertaken through diverse scholarly methodologies, and it treats religious experiences and ideas within a variety of cultural contexts in different periods. Students who wish to understand the manner in which religion, in its broadest terms, has contributed to the shaping of the human experience are encouraged to undertake a course of study that will allow them to delve deeply into questions that intrigue and inspire them.

The religious studies major makes the study of religion the focus of an education in the humanities and social sciences. The major draws students into an exploration of critical issues and themes that have shaped human life and thought in all time periods and in all cultures around the world. The major proposes a broad balance between breadth and depth for all students, and it requires each student to work out the particular balance of the course of study with the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Required courses for the Religious Studies major
The religious studies major requires completion of 30 credits. The same course may not fulfill more than one distribution requirement. Requirements may be taken in any order, but students are encouraged to take the introductory courses early in the major.

Note: These requirements are for students who declared the major on or after January 4, 2017. Students who declared the major prior to that date may opt to fulfill the new requirements or continue under the old requirements.

Introductory courses
RELGST 0105 Religions of the West
RELGST 0505 Religions of Asia

Survey course; select one of the following courses
RELGST 0025 Major Biblical Themes
RELGST 0405 Witchcraft to Walden Pond Religion in Early America
RELGST 0415 Religion in Modern America
RELGST 0455 Intro to Islamic Civilization
RELGST 0715 Philosophy of Religion
RELGST 1120 Origins of Christianity
RELGST 1130 Varieties of Christianity
RELGST 1135 Orthodox Christianity
RELGST 1210 Jews and Judaism-Ancient
RELGST 1220 Jews and Judaism-Medieval
RELGST 1250 Jews and Judaism-Modern
RELGST 1500 Religion in India 1
RELGST 1550 East Asian Buddhism
RELGST 1560 Chinese Religious Traditions
RELGST 1570 Japanese Religious Traditions

Thematic courses; three courses in one of the following thematic clusters.

Religion, Medicine, and the Body
RELGST 1143 Death in the Name of God - Martyrs and Martyrdom
RELGST 1150 Body and Society in Late Antiquity
RELGST 1151 Death in the Mediterranean World
RELGST 1405 Religion and Sexuality
RELGST 1554 Death and Beyond in Buddhist Cultures
RELGST 1558 Buddhism and Psychology
RELGST 1725 Death and the Healthcare Profession

Spirituality and Rationality
RELGST 0090 Myth in the Ancient Near East
RELGST 0735 Wisdom
RELGST 1100 Israel in the Biblical Age
RELGST 1140 Dualism in the Ancient World
RELGST 1142 Construction of Evil
RELGST 1145 Greco-Roman Religions
RELGST 1222 Jewish Mysticism
RELGST 1540 Saints East and West
RELGST 1545 Mysticism East and East
RELGST 1552 East Asian Meditative Traditions
RELGST 1610 Myth, Symbol, Ritual
RELGST 1760 Religion and Rationality
RELGST 1762 Guide to the Perplexed

Religion, Culture, and Creative Expression
RELGST 0435 Religion and Film
RELGST 0525 Religion and Culture in East Asia
RELGST 1148 Religions of Ancient Egypt
RELGST 1160 Jerusalem - History and Imagination
RELGST 1225 Jewish Culture in Medieval Spain
RELGST 1228 Exodus and Passover
RELGST 1425 Popular Religion in America
RELGST 1452 Hymns and HipHop Sounds of Islam
RELGST 1510 Religion in India 2 Storytelling as a Religious Form
RELGST 1557 Buddhist Lives
RELGST 1572 Popular Religion in a Changing Japan
Religion, Identity, and Global Problems
- RELGST 1240 Jews and the City
- RELGST 1241 Gender in Jewish History
- RELGST 1252 History of the Holocaust
- RELGST 1372 Catholicism in the New World
- RELGST 1438 Religion and Politics
- RELGST 1450 Islam and Politics
- RELGST 1518 Religion and Ecology
- RELGST 1520 Buddhism Along the Silk Road
- RELGST 1642 History of Christian-Muslim Relations
- RELGST 1644 Jewish-Christian Relations
- RELGST 1660 History and Memory in the Jewish Tradition
- RELGST 1681 Zionism, Anti-Zionism, Post-Zionism

Distribution requirement
Students must take one course from each of the following lists. These courses substantially treat major area subfields.

One course focusing on religion in Asia
- RELGST 0025 Major Biblical Themes
- RELGST 0090 Myth in the Ancient Near East
- RELGST 1100 Israel in the Biblical Age
- RELGST 1120 Origins of Christianity
- RELGST 1130 Varieties of Early Christianity
- RELGST 1132 Paul
- RELGST 1135 Orthodox Christianity
- RELGST 1140 Dualism in the Ancient World
- RELGST 1142 Construction of Evil
- RELGST 1143 Death in the Name of God - Martyrs and Martyrdom
- RELGST 1145 Greco-Roman Religions
- RELGST 1148 Religions of Ancient Egypt
- RELGST 1150 Body and Society in Late Antiquity
- RELGST 1151 Death in the Mediterranean World
- RELGST 1160 Jerusalem - History and Imagination
- RELGST 1210 Classical Judaism
- RELGST 1220 Medieval Jewish Civilization
- RELGST 1222 Jewish Mysticism
- RELGST 1225 Jewish Culture in Medieval Spain
- RELGST 1400 Religion and Culture in America
- RELGST 1454 Islamic Thought
- RELGST 1540 Saints East and West
- RELGST 1545 Mysticism East and West
- RELGST 1624 Women and Judaism
- RELGST 1640 Jews in the Islamic World
- RELGST 1642 Christian-Muslim Relations
- RELGST 1644 Jewish-Christian Relations
- RELGST 1645 Jesus and Judaism
- RELGST 1675 Reading the Hebrew Bible
- RELGST 1680 Readings in Jewish Historiography
- RELGST 1762 Guide to the Perplexed

One course focusing on modern or contemporary religion on the Middle East, Europe, or the Americas
- RELGST 0405 Witches to Walden Pond Religion in Early America
- RELGST 0415 Religion in Modern America
- RELGST 0435 Religion, Literature and Film
- RELGST 0455 Intro to Islamic Civilization
- RELGST 0715 Philosophy of Religion
- RELGST 1240 Jews and the City
- RELGST 1241 Gender and Jewish History
- RELGST 1250 Jews and Judaism - Modern
- RELGST 1252 History of the Holocaust
- RELGST 1256 Modern Israel
- RELGST 1372 Catholicism in the New World
- RELGST 1400 Religion and Culture in America
- RELGST 1405 Religion and Sexuality
- RELGST 1410 Religion in American Thought
- RELGST 1412 Migration in American Religion
- RELGST 1415 Race and Religion in America
- RELGST 1425 Popular Religion in America
- RELGST 1427 Religion and Law
- RELGST 1438 Religion and Politics
- RELGST 1450 Islam and Politics
- RELGST 1452 Hymns and HipHop - Sounds of Islam
- RELGST 1518 Religion and Ecology
- RELGST 1561 Zionism, Anti-Zionism, Post-Zionism
- RELGST 1725 Death and the Healthcare Professions
- RELGST 1760 Religion and Rationality

Electives; three courses
Students must take one 10000-level RELGST course of their choice. The other two courses may include an internship, an undergraduate teaching assistantship, or a directed study course. The student must complete a minimum of nine credits in elective courses.

Capstone Seminar
- RELGST 1903 Directed Research Seminar
Prerequisite: At least six RELGST courses

Related area: A minimum of 12 credits is required in any one Dietrich department chosen in consultation with the major advisor. The completion of an official Dietrich School minor or certificate or a UCIS certificate also satisfies this requirement. Students may wish to consult with the director of undergraduate studies for help formulating their options.

Grade requirements: All courses counted toward the major must be taken for a letter grade and completed with a C grade or above. At least five courses and the capstone seminar must be completed on the Oakland campus. Students transferring from other colleges or universities need to consult with the director of undergraduate studies about transferring courses and credits to be applied to the major.

Satisfactory/No Credit option: No more than three courses that count toward the major can be taken on an S/NC basis.

Writing (W) requirement: The capstone seminar fulfills the W-course requirement for this major.

Honors major requirements: Department honors require a GPA of 3.25 or higher in the major and a B+ or above in the capstone seminar.

Advising: Clark Chilson
- CL 2610
- 412-624-5977
- chilson@pitt.edu

Requirements for the Religious Studies minor
The RELGST minor consists of 15 credits. Please see the department’s Web site for more information.