The study of religion at UVM is a vital part of the wider study of human cultures, global affairs, and personal identities. Our secular approach invites students to engage the study of religion free of ties to religious training or affiliation. Department faculty, trained in the humanities and social sciences, bring a uniquely transdisciplinary and integrative approach to their teaching. The department curriculum explores a wide array of specific historical traditions, including African and African diasporic religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and religions in North America, as well as broader religious dynamics shaped by ritual, race, gender, aesthetics, media, politics, and popular culture. Through their study of religion students come to understand the complexity of religious communities in specific times and places, and to appreciate diversity within particular religious communities. Students also gain an enhanced understanding of cultural diversity through the study of a variety of worldviews and behaviors, and explore international and historical perspectives that provide the necessary context for understanding their own culture.

The religion major is structured around courses that explore theories and methods in the study of religion, courses that investigate religious traditions or cultures, and courses that analyze problems in the study of religion. As part of their coursework for the major students also research, write, and revise an extended paper that serves as a capstone of their study of religion at UVM.

MAJORS

RELIGION MAJOR

Religion B.A.

MINORS

RELIGION MINORS

Jewish Studies
Religion

Courses

REL 020. D2: Comparing Religions. 3 Credits.
Comparison of diverse practices and beliefs from selected religious traditions and cultures.

REL 021. D2: Religions in Asia. 3 Credits.
Study of the Hindu, Buddhist, and East Asian religious traditions as expressed in their basic symbolisms, writings, practices, and cultural forms.

REL 023. D2: What is the Bible?. 3 Credits.
An introduction to the study of religion through an examination of the creation of biblical and related texts of ancient Babylon, Israel, and the early Christian movement. Investigate their diverse religious practices and our own assumptions about unfamiliar cultures.

REL 026. D2: Religions in Africa. 3 Credits.
Introduction to the study of religion with an emphasis on African religious beliefs, practices and experiences.

REL 027. Integrated Humanities. 3 Credits.
Study of religious and philosophical thought in Western culture from Hebraic and Greek antiquity to present. Co-requisites: Concurrent enrollment in the Integrated Humanities Program, ENGS 027, HST 013.

REL 028. Integrated Humanities. 3 Credits.
Study of religious and philosophical thought in Western culture from Hebraic and Greek antiquity to present. Co-requisite: Concurrent enrollment in the Integrated Humanities Program, ENGS 028, HST 014.

REL 029. D2: Religion and Globalization. 3 Credits.
Study of the global dimensions of religion, including the impact of globalization on religious communities, and the effect of religious movements on global processes.

REL 030. D2: Introducing Islam. 3 Credits.
Introduces Islam in the context of the study of religion, focusing especially on its variation over time and location, as evidenced by texts, rituals, festivals, and competing interpretations.

REL 050. Introduction to Jewish Studies. 3 Credits.
An introduction to Jewish history, religious thought and practice, ethics, and law. Cross-listed with: JS 050.

REL 080. Religion & Race in America. 3 Credits.
Historical survey of forms of African-American religion in the U.S. in their relation to slavery, segregation, and civil rights; current issues in education and cultural diversity.

REL 085. On the Meaning of Life. 3 Credits.
An exploration of the ways in which different religious and philosophic thinkers, texts, and traditions have responded to questions concerning the meaning of human life.

REL 086. Phil Questions & Rel Responses. 3 Credits.
An exploration of philosophic questions dealing with religious responses drawing on thinkers from classical, modern, and contemporary texts.

REL 090. Internship. 1-3 Credits.
On-site supervised work experience combined with a structured academic learning plan directed by a faculty member or a faculty-staff team in which a faculty member is the instructor of record, for which academic credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 096. Intro Special Topics. 1-18 Credits.
See Schedule of Courses for specific titles.

REL 100. Interpretation of Religion. 3 Credits.
Examination of major theories and methods used in studying and interpreting religious phenomena. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.
REL 103. Sacred Sounds. 3 Credits.
This course examines the sonic aspects of religious life, paying particular attention to musical phenomena. Prerequisite: Three hours of Religion.

REL 104. Mysticism, Shamanism & Possesn. 3 Credits.
Comparative study of ways in which the inward dimension of religious life finds expression. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 107. Rel Perspectives on Death. 3 Credits.
Comparative study of the history of Christian and Buddhist beliefs and practices concerned with the afterlife, specifically the postmortem realms of heaven, hell, and purgatory. Prerequisite: Three hours of Religion.

REL 108. Myth, Symbol & Ritual. 3 Credits.
Study of patterns and significance of myth and ritual as they appear in cross-cultural perspective, with reference to contemporary interpretations of symbol and language. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 109. Ritualization: Rel, Body, Culture. 3 Credits.
A cross-cultural examination of ritual strategies for integrating personal and social experience, with attention to various theories and types of religious ritual. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 110. Religion and Ways of Knowing. 3 Credits.
How do religious people know? How do we know about religion? Examines some of the diverse ways in which human beings, in a variety of cultural contexts, have claimed knowledge that transcends empirically gained and verifiable perceptions. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 111. Western Religious Thought. 3 Credits.
Study of ways in which Western religious thinkers—in both Greek and Biblical traditions—have expressed and responded to philosophical-theological questions about human existence, world, and God. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 114. Jewish Scriptures. 3 Credits.
Study of the history and writings of the Hebraic-Judaic religion to the first century B.C. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 116. Judaism. 3 Credits.
Investigation of sustaining rituals, customs, institutions, and beliefs of normative Judaism. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 123. D1: Rel, Race & Ethnicity in US. 3 Credits.
Examines how religion and race intersect in the United States from the nineteenth century until the present. Explores how religion and race inform territorial claims, racial violence and identity, and representations of otherness. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 124. Christianity. 3 Credits.
Historical study of the Christian tradition examining major religious movements of early, medieval, and Reformation Christianity, and the spirituality of Christians during these periods. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 125. Women in Christianity to 1500. 3 Credits.
Women's roles in early and medieval Christianity, including women's religious orders, religious identities, mystical writings devotional practices, and their relationships to structures of ecclesiastical authority. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion. Cross-listed with: GSWS 114.

REL 127. D1: Caribbean Religion & Beyond. 3 Credits.
Investigates the ways in which Christianity, Vodou, and Rastafarianism have been represented in terms of U.S. racial/racist assumptions, cultural imaginaries, and imperial political projects. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 128. D1: Religion in America. 3 Credits.
Study of the relationship between religion, the cultural ethos, and identity in America. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 129. Religion & Pop Culture in the US. 3 Credits.
Introduces concepts and theories developed in Religion about the intersection of religion and popular culture in contemporary America. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 130. D2: Islam. 3 Credits.
Overview examining doctrines and practices of Muslims and their religious institutions from the rise of Islam to the present. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 131. D2: Studies in Hindu Traditions. 3 Credits.
Selected writings, rituals, and developments in Hindu traditions with reference to cultural assumptions of India. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 132. D2: Buddhist Traditions. 3 Credits.
A survey of Buddhist beliefs and practices in a diversity of cultures, including some modern developments. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 141. D2: Religion in Japan. 3 Credits.
An examination of Japanese values as expressed in folk, Shinto, and Buddhist traditions, and in social structures, aesthetic pursuits, or business practices. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 145. D2: Religion in China. 3 Credits.
Examination of Classical, Confucian and Taoist thought through texts in translation, developments in these traditions, and interactions with folk religion and Buddhism in the premodern period. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 163. D2: Women & Religion in Africa. 3 Credits.
This course examines the relationships between women and religious institutions, practices, and communities in a variety of settings in sub-Saharan Africa. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion. Cross-listed with: GSWS 113.

REL 164. D1: Religion and Race in US. 3 Credits.
Examination of how religion and race mutually inform shared understandings of moral and political identities, hierarchies, and boundaries across a variety of religious movements and institutional settings from the nineteenth century through the present. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.
REL 167. D2: Christianity in Africa. 3 Credits.
Examination of Christianity in Africa from both historical and cultural perspectives. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 173. Studies in Gender & Religion. 3 Credits.
Selected topics focusing on the social and religious construction of gender and the shape of women’s religious lives. Religious traditions studied vary by semester. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion. May be repeated up to six hours. Cross-listed with: GSWS 112.

REL 180. Moral&Rel Persp on Holocaust. 3 Credits.
A study of the Holocaust in relation to questions of moral responsibility, justice, guilt, and human suffering, focusing on Jewish responses. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion, HST 190, or Permission of Instructor.

REL 190. Teaching Assistantship. 1-3 Credits.
Undergraduate student service as a teaching assistant, usually in an introductory level course in the discipline, for which credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 191. Teaching Assistantship. 1-3 Credits.
Undergraduate student service as a teaching assistant, usually in an introductory level course in the discipline, for which credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 192. Internship. 1-18 Credits.
On-site supervised work experience combined with a structured academic learning plan directed by a faculty member or a faculty-staff team in which a faculty member is the instructor of record, for which academic credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 195. Intermediate Special Topics. 1-18 Credits.
Intermediate courses or seminars on topics beyond the scope of existing departmental offerings. See Schedule of Courses for specific titles. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion.

REL 196. Intermediate Special Topics. 1-18 Credits.
Intermediate courses or seminars on topics beyond the scope of existing departmental offerings. See Schedule of Courses for specific titles.

REL 197. Independent Study. 1-18 Credits.
A course which is tailored to fit the interests of a specific student, which occurs outside the traditional classroom/laboratory setting under the supervision of a faculty member, for which credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 198. Undergraduate Research. 1-18 Credits.
Undergraduate student work on individual or small team research projects under the supervision of a faculty member, for which credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 202. Research in Religion Practicum. 1 Credit.
Research practicum taken concurrently with a 200-level seminar in the Religion Department. It is designed to support Religion majors in their development of effective research and writing skills as part of their work in the major. Prerequisites: Religion major; Junior/Senior standing. Co-requisite: Concurrent enrollment in a three-credit Religion 200-level course.

REL 203. Senior Colloquium. 1 Credit.
Capstone course for Religion majors. Participants substantially revise their REL 202 seminar paper and present their research to the colloquium. Prerequisites: REL 202; Religion major; Senior standing.

REL 214. Studies in Judaica. 3 Credits.
Selected topics of concentration emerging out of and related to the study of normative Judaism, e.g. the prophetic faith, Rabbinic Judaism, Hasidism, and Jewish mysticism. Prerequisites: Nine hours in Religion, with three hours at the intermediate level; REL 116 recommended. May be repeated up to six hours.

REL 224. Studies in Christianity. 3 Credits.
Examination of selected issues, movements, periods, or individuals within the Christian tradition. Prerequisites: Nine hours in Religion (REL 124, REL 125, or REL 173 recommended). May be repeated up to six hours.

REL 228. Studies in Western Rel Thought. 3 Credits.
Important figures, issues, movements, or texts examined. Prerequisites: Nine hours in Religion, with three hours at the intermediate level. May be repeated up to six hours.

REL 230. Studies in Islam. 3 Credits.
Topics varying by semester such as Women and Islam, Sufi (mystical) traditions, Shi‘ite Islam, Islam and the West, and South Asian Muslim Cultures. Prerequisites: Nine hours in Religion, with three hours at the intermediate level; REL 130 recommended.

REL 234. D2:Buddhism in Sri Lanka. 3 Credits.
An examination of Theravada Buddhist belief and practice in the context of Sri Lankan culture, with attention to lay and monastic interaction. Prerequisite: Nine hours in Religion with three hours at the intermediate level, or REL 132.

REL 240. Studies in Asian Religions. 3 Credits.
Concentrated studies in the history, life, or thought of a selected Asian religious tradition. Prerequisite: Three hours in Religion at intermediate level in the same religious traditions.

REL 255. Religion, Nation, and State. 3 Credits.
Exploration of religion in the public life of the modern nation-state. Focusing on the relationship of nationalism and religion, examines how religion is both a source of mobilization by the state and a means of resistance to it. Prerequisite: 9 credit hours in Religion.

REL 259. Religion and Secular Culture. 3 Credits.
Comparison of religious and secular systems of meaning, value, and practice. Prerequisite: Nine hours in Religion, with three hours at the intermediate level.

REL 290. Internship. 1-18 Credits.
On-site supervised work experience combined with a structured academic learning plan directed by a faculty member or a faculty-staff team in which a faculty member is the instructor of record, for which academic credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 291. Tpcs in Hist & Phenom of Rel. 1-6 Credits.
Prerequisite: Nine hours in Religion, with six hours at the intermediate level; Junior standing. May be repeated up to six hours.
REL 292. Tpcs in Hist & Phenom of Rel. 1-6 Credits.
Prerequisite: Nine hours in Religion, with six hours at the intermediate level; Junior standing. May be repeated up to six hours.

REL 293. Undergraduate Research. 1-18 Credits.
Undergraduate student work on individual or small team research projects under the supervision of a faculty member, for which credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 294. Independent Study. 1-18 Credits.
A course which is tailored to fit the interests of a specific student, which occurs outside the traditional classroom/laboratory setting under the supervision of a faculty member, for which credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 295. Teaching Assistantship. 1-3 Credits.
Undergraduate student service as a teaching assistant, usually in an introductory level course in the discipline, for which credit is awarded. Offered at department discretion.

REL 296. Special Topics. 1-18 Credits.
See schedule of courses for specific titles.

REL 297. Interdisciplinary Seminar. 3 Credits.
Student-faculty workshop on a topic of current interest, employing resources from various disciplines. Prerequisites: Nine hours in Religion, with six hours at the intermediate level; Junior standing; Instructor permission.

REL 298. Interdisciplinary Seminar. 3 Credits.
Student-faculty workshop on a topic of current interest, employing resources from various disciplines. Prerequisites: Nine hours in Religion, with six hours at the intermediate level; Junior standing; Instructor permission.