RELIGIOUS STUDIES, BA

Banner Code: LA-BA-RELI

B465 Robinson Hall
Fairfax Campus

Website: religious.gmu.edu/programs/la-ba-reli

Religious studies provides students an understanding of the traditions of religions across the globe. Areas of study offered by the department include Asian religious traditions, Near (Middle) East religious traditions (Judaism, Islam, and Christianity), and comparative aspects of religion. Students develop skills in reading and interpreting sacred texts. They explore the cultural and social dimensions of religion along with a consideration of religious values and ethics from comparative and cross-cultural perspectives, and with relation to global issues. Students go on to work in the government, service, or nonprofit sectors, as well as pursue graduate work in the humanities.

Admissions & Policies

Policies

Students in this major complete at least 33 credits within the major, earning a minimum grade of 2.00 in each course. No course applied to the major in religious studies may be used to fulfill more than one requirement.

For policies governing all undergraduate degrees, see AP.5 Undergraduate Policies.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: minimum 120

Students should be aware of the specific policies associated with this program, located on the Admissions & Policies tab.

Core Courses in the Major

Introductory Courses in the Main World Religions

RELI 211	Religions of the West (Mason Core)	3
RELI 212	Religions of Asia (Mason Core)	3
Total Credits		6

Comparative or Methodological Aspects of the Study of Religion

Select two courses from the following:		6
ANTH 313	Myth, Magic, and Mind (Mason Core)	
PHIL 313	Philosophy of Religion	
RELI 337	Mysticism: East and West	
RELI 341	Global Perspectives on Spirituality and Healing (Mason Core)	
RELI 490	Comparative Study of Religions (Mason Core)	
SOCI 385	Sociology of Religion	

RELI 376	Special Topics in Religious Thought [1]	
Total Credits		6

[1] Only when topic is relevant and with the prior written approval of the undergraduate director.

Religious Studies

Select four courses (12 credits) from any religious studies courses (RELI) at the 300 and 400 level other than those used to fulfill the requirements above. [1]	12
Total Credits	12

[1] Choose courses in a scriptural language (such as Arabic, Biblical Hebrew, Chinese, Classical Greek, Latin, or Sanskrit). Up to 6 credits of a scriptural language may be used to fulfill this requirement and the 6 credits of electives.

One Seminar

Students should take this course during their senior year.

RELI 420	Seminar	3
Total Credits		3

Electives in the Major

Select two electives in consultation with an advisor. [1]	6
Total Credits	6

[1] Choose from courses in religious studies, related disciplines (including anthropology, art history, and history), or a scriptural language (such as Arabic, Biblical Hebrew, Chinese, Classical Greek, Latin, or Sanskrit). Up to 6 credits of a scriptural language may be used to fulfill this requirement and the requirement of 12 credits in religious studies at 300 and 400 level.

Writing-Intensive Requirement

The university requires all students to complete at least one course designated "writing intensive" in their majors. Students majoring in religious studies fulfill this requirement by successfully completing RELI 420 Seminar.

Upper Level Requirement

Students seeking a bachelor's degree must apply at least 45 credits of upper-level courses (numbered 300 or above) toward graduation requirements.

College Level Requirements for the BA Degree

In addition to the Mason Core program, students pursuing a BA degree must complete the coursework below. Except where expressly prohibited, a course used to fulfill a college level requirement may also be used simultaneously to satisfy other requirements (Mason Core requirements or requirements for the major).

Philosophy or Religious Studies

Code	Title	Credits
Select 3 credits from the following:		3
PHIL [1]		

RELI

[1] Note that the following courses may not be used to fulfill this requirement:
- PHIL 323 Classical Western Political Theory
- PHIL 324 Modern Western Political Theory
- PHIL 327 Contemporary Western Political Theory
- PHIL 393 Humanities College to Career
- PHIL 460 Senior Seminar in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics

Additionally, PHIL 253 Philosophy and Literature (Mason Core) and RELI 235 Religion and Literature (Mason Core) cannot be used to fulfill both the philosophy/religious studies requirement and the Mason Core literature requirement.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

Code	Title	Credits
Select 3 credits of social and behavioral sciences from the following (additional to the Mason Core social and behavioral sciences requirement) [1]		3
ANTH		
CRIM		
ECON		
GOVT		
HIST [2]		
LING		
PSYC		
SOCI		
Or choose from the following GGS courses:		
GGS 101	Major World Regions (Mason Core)	
GGS 103	Human Geography (Mason Core)	
GGS 110	Introduction to Geoinformation Technologies	
GGS 301	Political Geography	
GGS 303	Geography of Resource Conservation (Mason Core)	
GGS 304	Population Geography (Mason Core)	
GGS 305	Economic Geography	
GGS 306	Urban Geography	
GGS 315	Geography of the United States	
GGS 316	Geography of Latin America	
GGS 320	Geography of Europe	
GGS 325	Geography of North Africa and the Middle East	
GGS 330	Geography of the Soviet Succession States	
GGS 357	Structures in Urban Governance and Planning	
GGS 380	Geography of Virginia	

[1] The two courses used to fulfill the combined college and Mason Core requirements must be from different disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences.

[2] HIST 100 History of Western Civilization (Mason Core) and HIST 125 Introduction to World History (Mason Core) may not be used to fulfill this requirement.

Foreign Language

Code	Title	Credits
Intermediate-level proficiency in one foreign language, fulfilled by: [1]		
Completing a course in a foreign language numbered 202, 209, or 210 (or higher level courses taught in the language)		
Or achieving a satisfactory score on an approved proficiency test		
Or completing the following ASL three course sequence:		
EDSE 115	American Sign Language (ASL) I	
EDSE 116	American Sign Language (ASL) II	
EDSE 219	American Sign Language (ASL) III	

[1] Students who are already proficient in a second language may be eligible for a waiver of this requirement. Additional information on waivers can be found at the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs (http://chssundergrad.gmu.edu).

Non-Western Culture

Select 3 credits of an approved course in the study of a non-Western culture (additional to the Mason Core requirement in global understanding)

Code	Title	Credits
Select 3 credits (additional to Mason Core Global Understanding requirement) [1]		
ANTH 114	Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 300	Civilizations	3
ANTH 301	Native North Americans	3
ANTH 302	Peoples and Cultures of Latin America (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 303	Peoples and Cultures of the Andes	3
ANTH 306	Peoples and Cultures of Island Asia (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 307	Ancient Mesoamerica (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 308	Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 309	Peoples and Cultures of India (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 313	Myth, Magic, and Mind (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 314	Zombies	3
ANTH 316	Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 323	Digging and Dealing in the Dead: Ethics in Archaeology	3
ANTH 330	Peoples and Cultures of Selected Regions: Non-Western	3
ANTH 332	Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Globalization (Mason Core)	3
ANTH 381	Medical Anthropology	3
ANTH 383	Cities of the Global South	3
ANTH 396	Issues in Anthropology: Social Sciences (Mason Core)	3
ARAB 360	Topics in Arabic Cultural Production	3
ARAB 420	Survey of Arabic Literature	3

ARAB 440	Topics in Arabic Religious Thought and Texts (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 203	Survey of Asian Art (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 204	Survey of Latin American Art (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 206	Survey of African Art (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 318	Art and Archaeology of Ancient Egypt	3
ARTH 319	Art and Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 320	Art of the Islamic World (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 382	Arts of India (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 383	Arts of Southeast Asia (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 384	Arts of China (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 385	Arts of Japan (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 386	The Silk Road (Mason Core)	3
ARTH 482	RS: Advanced Studies in Asian Art	3
CHIN 318	Introduction to Classical Chinese (Mason Core)	3
CHIN 320	Contemporary Chinese Film	3
CHIN 325	Major Chinese Writers (Mason Core)	3
DANC 118	World Dance (Mason Core)	3
ECON 361	Economic Development of Latin America (Mason Core)	3
ECON 362	African Economic Development (Mason Core)	3
FREN 451	Topics in Sub-Saharan Francophone Literature and Culture	3
FREN 454	Topics in Caribbean Francophone Literature and Culture	3
GGS 101	Major World Regions (Mason Core)	3
GGS 316	Geography of Latin America	3
GGS 325	Geography of North Africa and the Middle East	3
GGS 330	Geography of the Soviet Succession States	3
GGS 399	Select Topics in GGS	3
GOVT 328	Non-Western Political Theory	3
GOVT 332	Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa	3
GOVT 333	Government and Politics of Asia	3
GOVT 340	Central Asian Politics	3
GOVT 341	Chinese Foreign Policy	3
GOVT 345	Islam and Politics	3
GOVT 432	Political Change and Social Development in Sub-Saharan Africa	3
GOVT 433	Political Economy of East Asia	3
HIST 251	Survey of East Asian History (Mason Core)	3
HIST 252	Survey of East Asian History (Mason Core)	3
HIST 261	Survey of African History (Mason Core)	3
HIST 262	Survey of African History (Mason Core)	3
HIST 271	Survey of Latin American History (Mason Core)	3
HIST 272	Survey of Latin American History (Mason Core)	3
HIST 281	Survey of Middle Eastern Civilization (Mason Core)	3
HIST 282	Survey of Middle Eastern Civilization (Mason Core)	3
HIST 326	Stalinism	3
HIST 327	The Soviet Union and Russia Since World War II	3
HIST 328	Rise of Russia (Mason Core)	3
HIST 329	Modern Russia and the Soviet Union (Mason Core)	3
HIST 353	History of Traditional China	3
HIST 354	Modern China	3
HIST 356	Modern Japan (Mason Core)	3
HIST 357	Postwar Japan (Mason Core)	3
HIST 358	Post-1949 China (Mason Core)	3
HIST 360	History of South Africa (Mason Core)	3
HIST 364	Revolution and Radical Politics in Latin America (Mason Core)	3
HIST 365	Conquest and Colonization in Latin America (Mason Core)	3
HIST 366	Comparative Slavery	3
HIST 367	History, Fiction, and Film in Latin America	3
HIST 387	Topics in Global History (Mason Core)	3-6
HIST 426	The Russian Revolution	3
HIST 460	Modern Iran (Mason Core)	3
HIST 461	Arab-Israeli Conflict	3
HIST 462	Women in Islamic Society (Mason Core)	3
HIST 465	The Middle East in the 20th Century	3
JAPA 310	Japanese Culture in a Global World (Mason Core)	3
JAPA 340	Topics in Japanese Literature (Mason Core)	3
KORE 320	Korean Popular Culture in a Global World	3
MUSI 103	Musics of the World (Mason Core)	3
RELI 211	Religions of the West (Mason Core)	3
RELI 212	Religions of Asia (Mason Core)	3
RELI 240	Death and the Afterlife in World Religions	3
RELI 272	Islam	3
RELI 313	Hinduism (Mason Core)	3
RELI 314	Chinese Philosophies and Religious Traditions	3
RELI 315	Buddhism (Mason Core)	3
RELI 337	Mysticism: East and West	3
RELI 365	Muhammad: Life and Legacy	3
RELI 374	Islamic Thought (Mason Core)	3
RELI 375	Qur'an and Hadith	3
RELI 379	Islamic Law, Society, and Ethics	3
RELI 387	Islam, Democracy, and Human Rights	3
RELI 490	Comparative Study of Religions (Mason Core)	3
RUSS 353	Russian Civilization (Mason Core)	3

| RUSS 354 | Contemporary Post-Soviet Life (Mason Core) | 3 |

[1]   A course used to fulfill the Mason Core global understanding requirement may not be simultaneously used to satisfy this college-level requirement. A course used to fulfill this requirement may be used simultaneously to fulfill any other requirements (Mason Core requirements, college-level requirements, or requirements for the major). Additional information on waivers can be found at the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs (http://chssundergrad.gmu.edu).

Mason Core

Note: Some Mason Core requirements may already be fulfilled by the major requirements listed above. Students are strongly encouraged to consult their advisors to ensure they fulfill all remaining Mason Core requirements.

Code	Title	Credits
Foundation Requirements		
Written Communication		6
Oral Communication		3
Quantitative Reasoning		3
Information Technology		3-7
Core Requirements		
Arts		3
Global Understanding		3
Literature		3
Natural Science		7
Social and Behavioral Sciences		3
Western Civilization/World History		3
Synthesis/Capstone Requirement [1]		
Synthesis/Capstone		3
Total Credits		40

[1]   minimum 3 credits

Additional Elective Courses

Any remaining credits may be completed with electives to bring the degree total to 120.

Accelerated Master's

The accelerated master's programs in the list below specify the BA in religious studies as a feeder degree for their programs. It is important to note, however, that many accelerated master's programs are available for any bachelor's degree at Mason, including this one. See the full list of master's degrees with accelerated programs at George Mason.

Bachelor's Degree (selected)/Middle East and Islamic Studies, Accelerated MA

Overview

Highly-qualified undergraduates pursuing a BA in select majors (listed below) may apply to the accelerated master's degree in Middle East and Islamic studies. If accepted, and depending on their undergraduate major, students will be able to earn a bachelor's degree in their chosen major and a master's degree in Middle East and Islamic studies after satisfactory completion of 144 credits, sometimes within five years. See AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees.

Students in an accelerated degree program must fulfill all university requirements for the master's degree. For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies.

Selected Majors

- government and international politics
- global affairs
- history
- religious studies
- Russian and Eurasian studies
- sociology
- anthropology

It is preferred, though not required, that the student have a minor in Middle East studies or Islamic studies.

Application Requirements

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions. For information specific to the accelerated MA in Middle East and Islamic studies, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (http://meis.gmu.edu/programs/la-ma-acel-meis).

Accelerated Option Requirements

While undergraduate students, accelerated master's students complete two graduate courses as indicated on their Accelerated Master's Program Application with a minimum grade of 3.00 in each course. Once admitted to the accelerated master's pathway, students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 in all course work. Upon completion and conferral of the undergraduate degree in the semester indicated in the application, they submit the Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Transition Form and are admitted to graduate status.

Code	Title	Credits
Select two courses from the following:		6
MEIS 500	Critical Issues and Debates in Middle East and Islamic Studies	
HIST 575	Approaches to Middle East and Islamic History	
GOVT 632	Politics and Societies of the Middle East	
RELI 644	Islamic Texts and Contexts	
Total Credits		6

As graduate students, accelerated master's students have an advanced standing. They must meet all master's degree requirements except for the two courses (6 credits) they completed as undergraduates. Students must begin their master's program the semester immediately following conferral of the undergraduate degree.

Reserve Graduate Credit

Students may take up to 6 additional graduate credits as reserve graduate credit. These credits do not apply to the undergraduate degree. To apply these credits to the master's degree, students should use the Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Transition Form.

Code	Title	Credits
Select up to 6 additional graduate credits from the following:		6
MEIS 500	Critical Issues and Debates in Middle East and Islamic Studies	
HIST 575	Approaches to Middle East and Islamic History	
GOVT 731	Advanced Seminar in Comparative Politics (when content focus is the Middle East)	
GOVT 733	Islam and Politics	
RELI 644	Islamic Texts and Contexts	
Total Credits		6

The ability to take courses, including ones not listed above, for reserve graduate credit is available to all high achieving undergraduates with the permission of the department. Permission is normally granted only to qualified Mason seniors within 15 hours of graduation. Permission is normally granted only to qualified Mason seniors within 15 hours of graduation. See AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates.

Bachelor's Degree (selected)/ Interdisciplinary Studies, Accelerated MAIS (Religion, Culture, and Values Concentration)

Overview

Highly-qualified undergraduates in selected majors (see below) may apply to the accelerated master's degree in interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in religion, culture, and values. If accepted, and depending on their undergraduate major, students will be able to earn a bachelor's degree in their chosen major and a master's in interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in religion, culture, and values after satisfactory completion of 150 credits, sometimes within five years. See AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees.

Students in an accelerated degree program must fulfill all university requirements for the master's degree. For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies.

Selected Majors

- Art history
- Philosophy
- Conflict analysis and resolution
- Global affairs
- History
- Religious studies
- Russian and Eurasian studies
- Sociology
- Anthropology

If the student has not majored in religious studies, it is preferred, though not required, that the student have a minor in religious studies.

Application Requirements

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in the Admissions. For information specific to the

accelerated MAIS, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (http://mais.gmu.edu/programs/la-mais-isin/application).

Accelerated Option Requirements

While undergraduate students, accelerated master's students complete two graduate courses as indicated on their Accelerated Master's Program Application with a minimum grade of 3.00 in each course. Once admitted to the accelerated master's pathway, students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 in all coursework. Upon completion and conferral of the undergraduate degree in the semester indicated in the application, they submit the Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Transition Form and are admitted to graduate status.

Code	Title	Credits
Select two from the following:		6
RELI 630	Approaches to the Study of Religion	
RELI 631	Sacred as Secular in Modern Spirituality	
RELI 632	World Religions in Conflict and Dialogue	
RELI 633	Ethical Perspectives of World Religions	
RELI 635	World Religions in Transition and Transformation	
RELI 636	Religion and the Natural Environment	
RELI 642	Sacred Language, Scripture, and Culture	
Total Credits		6

As graduate students, accelerated master's students have an advanced standing. They must meet all master's degree requirements except for the two courses (6 credits) they completed as undergraduates. Students must begin their master's program the semester immediately following conferral of the undergraduate degree.

Reserve Graduate Credit

Students may take up to 6 additional graduate credits as reserve graduate credit. These credits do not apply to the undergraduate degree. To apply these credits to the master's degree, students should use the Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Transition Form.

Code	Title	Credits
Select 6 credits from the following:		6
RELI 630	Approaches to the Study of Religion	
RELI 631	Sacred as Secular in Modern Spirituality	
RELI 632	World Religions in Conflict and Dialogue	
RELI 633	Ethical Perspectives of World Religions	
RELI 635	World Religions in Transition and Transformation	
RELI 636	Religion and the Natural Environment	
RELI 642	Sacred Language, Scripture, and Culture	
Total Credits		6

The ability to take courses, including ones not listed above, for reserve graduate credit is available to all high achieving undergraduates with the permission of the department. Permission is normally granted only to qualified Mason seniors within 15 hours of graduation. See AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates.