

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

http://www.gmu.edu/departments/religious_studies/

Name and description of the field.

The **Religious Studies** major allows students to study, understand, and become scholars in the rich, complex, and ever-expanding field of world religions. It is designed to enhance their understanding of the nature and role of religion in shaping the cultures and civilizations of the world as well as to examine human relationships with the world, nature, and the ultimate. The degree introduces students to the origins, development, and history of world religions. Students may choose to emphasize religions from the Western tradition, South Asian and East Asian traditions, or Biblical studies, with the aim being to understand their historical, cultural, and philosophical perspectives while examining their vigorous present-day manifestations.

What special skills or abilities are needed to succeed in this major?

Sound oral and written communication skills are essential to prepare one to analyze concepts, definitions, arguments, and problems in order to discuss them in writing and through presentations. A love of scholarly works is also desirable as one learns to organize ideas and issues, to deal with questions of value, and to extract what is essential from masses of information that is explored in either major.

If different programs are offered, what are the differences?

The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies offers two majors: Philosophy and Religious Studies. In addition, joint majors have been developed in English, psychology, and economics.

Is a Minor available? Yes. There is a minor in both philosophy and religious studies.

What are recent graduates doing?

The majors in philosophy and religious studies are not primarily oriented to job training of a specific nature. Rather, they serve to improve critical intellectual, analytical, written, and verbal communications skills and to develop flexible, analytical generalists. Thus, graduates have gone into a fairly wide variety of careers, including the following sample of job titles:

Analysts/Researchers	Human Resources Spec.	Mediator/Conflict Res.
Clergy	Journalist	Public Affairs Specialist
Consultant	Lawyer	Religious Educator
Diplomat	Librarian	Teacher
Editor/Writer	Market Researcher	Technical Writer

Career Library Resources – Go to

http://careers.gmu.edu/careerlibrary/wheretostart/phil_reli.pdf to see resources located in the Career Services Library in room 348, SUB I

Major, Career & Job Hunting Information Online (links to the academic department, associations and other useful sites) – Go to http://careers.gmu.edu/onlineresources/phil_reli.htm

Whom should students contact for further information?

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