

# BACHELOR OF ARTS (BA) DEGREE WITH A MAJOR IN RELIGION

## Program Learning Outcomes for the BA Degree with a Major in Religion

Upon completing the BA degree with a major in Religion, students will be able to:

1. Develop and apply critical toolkit to the study of religion and religious traditions including (inter)disciplinary methodologies and theories at a proficient level.  
*(Critical Skills for the Study of Religion: Theory, Method, and (Inter)Disciplinarity)*
2. Understand and interpret religious traditions by examining religion(s) as historical, social, and cultural phenomena. When appropriate, attention is given to the impact of globalism, immigration, colonialism, and other forms of transnational and multi-cultural (non)religious exchange at a proficient level.  
*(Historical, Social, (Multi-)Cultural Dimensions of Religion)*
3. Understand and interpret the subjective dimensions of religion(s) through analyses that explore the psychological, philosophical, and cognitive dynamics of religion and religious experience at a proficient level.  
*(Psychological, Philosophical, and Cognitive Dimensions of Religion)*
4. Understand and interpret religious traditions by examining the plurality of religious voices and expressions, including currents that have been marginalized, neglected, repressed, and censored in a variety of sociological, psychological, philosophical, and political ways at a proficient level.  
*(Religious Plurality and Marginal Currents)*
5. Develop the ability to read religious texts in their original languages and perform translations of texts when appropriate to the student's course of study at a proficient level.  
*(Foreign Language Skills)*

## Requirements for the BA Degree with a Major in Religion

For general university requirements, see [Graduation Requirements \(https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/). Students pursuing the BA degree with a major in Religion must complete:

- A minimum of 10 courses (30 credit hours) to satisfy major requirements.
- A minimum of 120 credit hours to satisfy degree requirements.
- A minimum of 6 courses (18 credit hours) taken at the 300-level or above.
- A maximum of 2 courses (6 credit hours) from study abroad or transfer credit. For additional departmental guidelines regarding transfer credit, see the [Policies](#) (p. 3) tab.

The courses listed below satisfy the requirements for this major. In certain instances, courses not on this official list may be substituted upon approval of the major's academic advisor, or where applicable, the department's Director of Undergraduate Studies. (Course substitutions

must be formally applied and entered into Degree Works by the major's [Official Certifier \(https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/\)](https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/). Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

### Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the Major in Religion		30
Total Credit Hours Required for the BA Degree with a Major in Religion		120

### Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Core Requirements</b>		
Core Course		
RELI 101	INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION	3
Religious Traditions		
Select 1 course from Judaism/Christianity/Islam/African-American Religions (see course list below)		3
Select 1 course from Indigenous African Religions/American Religions/Buddhism/Hinduism (see course list below)		3
<b>Elective Requirements</b>		
Select 6 elective courses from departmental (RELI) course offerings: <sup>1</sup>		18
<b>Senior Project</b>		
Select 1 course from the following: <sup>2</sup>		3
RELI 403	SENIOR THESIS I	
RELI 404	SENIOR THESIS II	
RELI 406	CHRISTIANITY AND LATE ANTIQUITY	
RELI 407	ARCHIVES OF THE IMPOSSIBLE	
RELI 416	NEW TESTAMENT / CHRISTIAN ORIGINS	
RELI 417	GNOSTIC AMERICA	
RELI 421	FOUCAULT & THE HERMENEUTICS OF SELF	
RELI 424	RELIGION AND POLITICS IN AFRICA	
RELI 426	RELIGION AND LITERATURE IN AFRICA	
RELI 430	RELIGION, PSYCHOLOGY & CULTURE	
RELI 431	THE BIBLE AND THE BRAIN	
RELI 444 / MDEM 444	VISIONS AND VISIONARY PRACTICES: MEDIEVAL TO MODERN	
RELI 449	SECOND CENTURY CHRISTIANITIES	
RELI 458	MYSTICISM: THEORIES AND METHODS	
RELI 470	BUDDHIST WISDOM TEXTS	
RELI 472	KABBALAH SEMINAR	
RELI 476 / FREN 324 / POLI 324	FROM DECOLONIZATION TO GLOBALIZATION	
RELI 481	GNOSTICISM SEMINAR	
RELI 488	THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS SCHOOLS	
<b>Total Credit Hours Required for the Major in Religion</b>		<b>30</b>
Additional Credit Hours to Complete Degree Requirements <sup>*</sup>		59

University Graduation Requirements (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/>)<sup>\*</sup> 31

**Total Credit Hours** 120

### Footnotes and Additional Information

<sup>\*</sup> **Note:** University Graduation Requirements include 31 credit hours, comprised of Distribution Requirements (Groups I, II, and III), FWIS, and LPAP coursework. In some instances, courses satisfying FWIS or distribution requirements may additionally meet other requirements, such as the Analyzing Diversity (AD) requirement, or some of the student's declared major, minor, or certificate requirements. Additional Credit Hours to Complete Degree Requirements include general electives, coursework completed as upper-level, residency (hours taken at Rice), and/or any other additional academic program requirements.

<sup>1</sup> Selection of courses should be worked out programmatically with a faculty member advisor so that at least 3 courses form a concentrated area of study.

<sup>2</sup> The Senior Project course is either a Seminar or Independent Study with a required research paper selected with the approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies. See the DUS for more information.

## Course Lists to Satisfy Requirements

### Judaism/Christianity/Islam/African-American Religions

Select a minimum of 1 course (3 credit hours) from the Judaism/Christianity/Islam/African-American Religions course options.

Code	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Judaism/Christianity/Islam/African-American Religions</b>		
RELI 104 / MDEM 103	INTRODUCTION TO JEWISH MYSTICISM	3
RELI 108	INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM	3
RELI 112	COMPARING CHRISTIANITIES: INTRODUCTION TO EARLY CHRISTIANITY	3
RELI 124	RELIGION AND THE ART OF HAPPINESS	3
RELI 126 / HEBR 126	INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL HEBREW II	3
RELI 127	INTERMEDIATE BIBLICAL HEBREW III	3
RELI 157	RELIGION AND HIP HOP CULTURE IN AMERICA	3
RELI 158	LIBERATION THEOLOGIES	3
RELI 203 / HIST 201	JUDAISM OF JESUS AND HILLEL	3
RELI 215 / FILM 215	MYSTIC CINEMA: KABBALAH IN FILM	3
RELI 221 / ASIA 221	THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD	3
RELI 223	QUR'AN AND COMMENTARY	3
RELI 243	THE BOOK OF GENESIS	3
RELI 270	INTRODUCTION TO THE BLACK CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES	3
RELI 271 / MDEM 271	MEDIEVAL POPULAR CHRISTIANITY	3
RELI 282	INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY	3
RELI 294	RELIGION IN FICTION AND FILM	3

RELI 301	NIETZSCHE AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT	3
RELI 304	JESUS AND THE GOSPELS	3
RELI 343 / HART 347	SEMINAR ON LOVE	3
RELI 348	CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM IN AFRICA	3
RELI 350 / MDEM 350	DEMONS, MENTAL ILLNESS AND MEDICINE	3
RELI 356	MAJOR ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY ISLAM	3
RELI 357	WHAT'S RELIGIOUS ABOUT BLACK RELIGION?	3
RELI 359	RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN THE CRUCIBLE OF GLOBALIZATION	3
RELI 365	PAUL AND THE NEW TESTAMENT	3
RELI 381	THE MESSIAH	3
RELI 382	LOST JUDAISMS: THE APOCRYPHAL WRITINGS	3
RELI 383	THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS	3
RELI 384	PILGRIMAGE AND CRUSADE	3
RELI 385 / HIST 381	GOD, TIME AND HISTORY	3
RELI 388	THE PSALMS	3
RELI 395	LOSING YOUR RELIGION IN FILM & FICTION & MUSIC	3
RELI 406	CHRISTIANITY AND LATE ANTIQUITY	3
RELI 416	NEW TESTAMENT / CHRISTIAN ORIGINS	3
RELI 424	RELIGION AND POLITICS IN AFRICA	3
RELI 426	RELIGION AND LITERATURE IN AFRICA	3
RELI 430	RELIGION, PSYCHOLOGY & CULTURE	3
RELI 442	CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY ARABIC TEXTS	3
RELI 449	SECOND CENTURY CHRISTIANITIES	3
RELI 458	MYSTICISM: THEORIES AND METHODS	3
RELI 472	KABBALAH SEMINAR	3
RELI 476 / FREN 324 / POLI 324	FROM DECOLONIZATION TO GLOBALIZATION	3
RELI 481	GNOSTICISM SEMINAR	3
RELI 488	THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS SCHOOLS	3

### Indigenous African Religions/American Religions/Buddhism/Hinduism

Select a minimum of 1 course (3 credit hours) from the Indigenous African Religions/American Religions/Buddhism/Hinduism course options.

Code	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Indigenous African Religions/American Religions/Buddhism/Hinduism</b>		
RELI 111	INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN RELIGIONS	3
RELI 157	RELIGION AND HIP HOP CULTURE IN AMERICA	3
RELI 231 / ASIA 231	AMERICAN METAPHYSICAL RELIGION	3

RELI 233 / TIBT 233	INTRODUCTION TO TIBETAN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURE	3
RELI 234 / TIBT 234	INTERMEDIATE TIBETAN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURE	3
RELI 270	INTRODUCTION TO THE BLACK CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES	3
RELI 311	RELIGION AND HIP HOP CULTURE IN AMERICA	3
RELI 322 / ASIA 322	INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM	3
RELI 332 / TIBT 332	ADVANCED TIBETAN LANGUAGE & CULTURE	3
RELI 333	KNOWING BODY/GLOWING MIND: BUDDHIST ARTS OF CONTEMPLATION AND ANALYSIS	3
RELI 337	SHAMANS, SAINTS, & SAGES	3
RELI 342 / ANTH 343	NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA	3
RELI 357	WHAT'S RELIGIOUS ABOUT BLACK RELIGION?	3
RELI 359	RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN THE CRUCIBLE OF GLOBALIZATION	3
RELI 378	MIND AND ART, FILM AND LITERATURE IN BUDDHISM	3
RELI 393	MUTANTS AND MYSTICS: RACE, SEXUALITY, AND THE FUTURE OF THE HUMANITIES	3
RELI 417	GNOSTIC AMERICA	3
RELI 424	RELIGION AND POLITICS IN AFRICA	3
RELI 426	RELIGION AND LITERATURE IN AFRICA	3
RELI 458	MYSTICISM: THEORIES AND METHODS	3
RELI 470	BUDDHIST WISDOM TEXTS	3

## Policies for the BA Degree with a Major in Religion

### Program Restrictions and Exclusions

Students pursuing the major in Religion should be aware of the following program restriction:

- As noted in [Majors, Minors, and Certificates](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-opportunities/majors-minors-certificates/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-opportunities/majors-minors-certificates/>), students may not major and minor in the same subject.

### Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see [Transfer Credit](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/transfer-credit/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/transfer-credit/>). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. The Office of Academic Advising maintains the university's official list of [transfer credit advisors](https://oaa.rice.edu/advising-network/transfer-credit-advisors/) (<https://oaa.rice.edu/advising-network/transfer-credit-advisors/>) on their website: <https://oaa.rice.edu>. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program's transfer credit advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

## Departmental Transfer Credit Guidelines

Students pursuing the major in Religion should be aware of the following departmental transfer credit guidelines:

- No more than 2 courses (6 credit hours) of transfer credit from U.S. or international universities of similar standing as Rice may apply towards the major.
- Requests for transfer credit will be considered by the departmental Director of Undergraduate Studies (and/or the program's official transfer credit advisor) on an individual case-by-case basis.

## Distribution Credit Information

The determination of distribution credit eligibility is done initially as part of the [new course creation process](https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/courseprocess/) (<https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/courseprocess/>). Additionally, as part of an [annual roll call](https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/distribution_credit/) ([https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/distribution\\_credit/](https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/distribution_credit/)) coordinated each Spring by the Office of the Registrar, course distribution credit eligibility is routinely reviewed and reaffirmed by the Dean's Offices of each of the academic schools.

Faculty and leadership in the academic schools are responsible for ensuring that the courses identified as distribution-credit-eligible meet the criteria as set in the [General Announcements](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/#text) (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/#text>). Students are responsible for ensuring that they meet [graduation requirements](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/#text) (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/#text>) by completing coursework designated as distribution-credit-eligible at the time of course registration.

Distribution courses from Religion (RELI) are broad-based, accessible to non-majors, and provide a foundation that enables students to integrate knowledge from multiple perspectives.

## Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Religion website: <https://reli.rice.edu/>

## Opportunities for the BA Degree with a Major in Religion

### Academic Honors

The university recognizes academic excellence achieved over an undergraduate's academic history at Rice. For information on university honors, please see [Latin Honors](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/>) (*summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *cum laude*) and [Distinction in Research and Creative Work](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/>). Some departments have department-specific Honors awards or designations.

The Saba Prize is the most prestigious award bestowed by the Department of Religion. It carries with it a substantial financial gift, and designates the student(s) who has demonstrated the highest form of academic excellence and contribution to the department over a four-year period.

### Departmental Honors Program

Qualified undergraduates may choose to submit their Senior Project to the department for consideration to receive [Distinction in Research and Creative Work](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/>). For details about the submission process and

this honors award, visit the department's [website \(https://reli.rice.edu/\)](https://reli.rice.edu/). To complete the year long Senior Thesis, the student elects RELI 403 (fall semester) and RELI 404 (spring semester) with their agreed-upon advisor. Students must have a minimum 3.20 GPA in Religion courses prior to enrolling in RELI 403 and RELI 404, a Religion faculty advisor, and the permission of the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Further details are available upon consultation with the department's Director of Undergraduate Studies.

### **Additional Information**

For additional information, please see the Religion website: <https://reli.rice.edu/>

See <https://humanities.rice.edu/student-life> (<https://humanities.rice.edu/student-life/>) for tables of fellowships, prizes, and internships/practica that may be relevant to this major.