

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) DEGREE IN THE FIELD OF RELIGION

Program Learning Outcomes for the MA and PhD Degrees in the field of Religion

Upon completing the MA and PhD degrees in the field of 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 professional 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 exchanges at a professional 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 professional level.
(*Psychological, Philosophical and Cognitive Dimensions of Religion*)
4. Understand and interpret religions traditions by examining the plurality of religious voice and expressions, including currents that have been marginalized, neglected, repressed, and censored in a variety of sociological, psychological, philosophical, and political ways at a professional level.
(*Religious Plurality and Marginal Currents*)
5. Develop the ability to read and understand relevant scholarly research/literature that has been published in foreign languages. 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 professional level.
(*Foreign Language Skills*)
6. Develop the ability to communicate effectively (inter)disciplinary knowledge and critical research in the classroom, at professional conferences, and in academic publications at a professional level.
(*Communication: Pedagogy and Professionalism*)

Requirements for the MA and PhD Degrees in the field of Religion

MA Degree Program

The MA degree is a non-thesis master's degree. For general university requirements, please see [Non-Thesis Master's Degrees](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-non-thesis-masters-degrees/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-non-thesis-masters-degrees/>). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see [All Graduate Students](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/>). Although students are not normally admitted to study for this non-thesis MA, graduate students may earn the MA after obtaining approval of their candidacy for the PhD. To pursue a thesis, terminal master's

degree in the field of Religion, please see the [Thesis Master's Degree](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/>) option.

The requirements listed in the General Announcements (GA) satisfy the minimum requirements for this degree program. In certain instances, courses (or requirements) not officially listed here may be substituted upon approval of the program's academic advisor or, where applicable, the department or program's Director of Graduate Studies. Course substitutions or any exceptions to the stated official curricular requirements must be approved by the [Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](https://graduate.rice.edu/) (<https://graduate.rice.edu/>). 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 MA Degree in the field of Religion	30

Requirements for the PhD Degree in the field of Religion

PhD Degree Program

For general university requirements, please see [Doctoral Degrees](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/>). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see [All Graduate Students](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/) (<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/>). The graduate program accepts a limited number of qualified students. A distinguished undergraduate record and high scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) are essential, and an advanced degree in the humanities is desirable. Students admitted into the program normally will receive financial assistance in the form of a tuition waiver and a stipend. As part of their training and in return for their stipends, students are expected to perform a minimum amount of services in return for their stipend by assisting the department as needed.

Students pursuing the PhD degree in the field of Religion are given a maximum of eight years to complete the PhD program, although funding is typically provided for a period of five years, with exceptions made for special circumstances extending to six years. Students pursuing the PhD degree in the field of Religion must complete the following:

- A minimum of 36 credit hours taken in 500-level and 600-level seminars.
- 2 Graduate Methods Seminars: RELI 650 and RELI 651.
- Successful completion of the second-year review.
- Passing grades on reading examinations in 2 secondary research languages (French and German) before taking qualifying exams.
- Passing grades in 4 comprehensive examinations.
- Oral discussion of thesis proposal.
- Satisfactory completion of thesis and oral defense.

All first year PhD students are required to take the introduction to Humanities doctoral study course HUMA 500 , *The Humanities Beyond the Disciplines*, (2 credit hours). The course does not replace or displace any of the required coursework in the department.

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Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the PhD Degree in the field of Religion		90

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Required Coursework		
HUMA 500	THE HUMANITIES BEYOND THE DISCIPLINES ¹	2
Additional Requirements as Defined by Department		88
Total Credit Hours		Minimum of 90

Footnotes and Additional Information

¹ HUMA 500 is required for all first-year PhD students within the School of Humanities.

Policies for the PhD Degree in the field of Religion

Department of Religion Graduate Program Handbook

The General Announcements (GA) is the official Rice curriculum. As an additional resource for students, the Department of Religion publishes a graduate program handbook, which can be found here: https://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2024_25/Religion_PhD_Graduate_Handbook.pdf.

Transfer Credit

For Rice University’s policy regarding transfer credit, see [Transfer Credit](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer) (<https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer>). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. Requests for transfer credit must be approved for Rice equivalency by the appropriate academic department offering the Rice equivalent course (corresponding to the subject code of the course content) and by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program’s advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

Additional Information

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

Opportunities for the PhD Degree in the field of Religion

Professional Development

Opportunities are available to teach undergraduate courses in the department. Students are encouraged to pursue teaching opportunities at colleges and universities. Limited funds also are available for students to attend conferences to present their research. The department encourages these and other efforts to prepare students for academic careers.

Additional Information

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