

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA - 2006/2007 UNDERGRADUATE CATALOG

• RELIGIOUS STUDIES (REL)

In Religious Studies, students are exposed to a cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary study of the way in which both individuals and civilizations are deeply influenced by human religious experience. The goal is to enable the educated person to understand better the various ways in which religious values and institutions shape human behavior through a comparative study of religions and cultures. Such an education is invaluable for careers as diverse as journalism, law, medicine, business, as well as careers more directly related to the practice of religion. Majors in Religious Studies will also find courses designed to give them the methodological, theoretical and linguistic skills needed to go on to advanced graduate study in the field.

Requirements for the Major in Religious Studies

Recommended Prerequisites (State Mandated Common Prerequisites)

Students wishing to transfer to USF should complete the A.A. degree at the community college. Some courses required for the major may also meet General Education Requirements thereby transferring maximum hours to the university. If students transfer with fewer than 60 semester hours of acceptable credit, the students must meet the university's entering freshman requirements including ACT or SAT test scores, GPA, and course requirements.

There are no State Mandated Common Prerequisites for this degree program.

Upper-level Requirements and Coursework for the Religious Studies Major

Students must choose a total of 36 credit hours from Religious Studies courses. Transfer students may not apply more than 12 hours taken elsewhere toward the major at the University of South Florida. Only letter grades will be counted toward the minimum of 24 credit hours taken at the University of South Florida for transfer students or 36 (for non-transfer students) credit hours necessary to complete the 36 credit hours required for the major. Students taking Religious Studies as a second major need to complete only 30 credit hours. To do so they must make a written request to the Undergraduate Director at the time they declare their major.

All majors must take

- a. REL 3003 Introduction to Religion (4)
- b. REL 4939 Development of Religious Studies (4)
- c. REL 4931 Seminar in Religion (3)
- d. An additional 26 credit hours chosen from Religious Studies courses. Students are expected to study at least two different religious traditions.

The three required courses must be taken in the sequence given above.

All transfer students must take a minimum of 24 hours in Religious Studies courses at the University of South Florida.

It is the prerogative of the Department of Religious Studies to determine whether courses taken at other universities may be applied toward the major at the University of South Florida. This will be decided as soon as the student becomes a major in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida.

The department's course offerings are sufficiently varied that a student should expect to enroll in its scheduled classes. No more than three directed studies courses may be applied toward the major. Any student who wishes to take any type of directed study, including REL 3900, must have the (written) approval of his/her instructor.

Requirements for the Minor in Religious Studies

Students choose a total of 18 credit hours from Religious Studies courses. Transfer students may not apply more than 6 credit hours taken elsewhere toward the minor at USF. Only letter grades will be counted for transfer. Requests for transfer of credit must be made to the Undergraduate Director in writing when declaring a minor.

All minors must take

- a. REL 3003 Introduction to Religion (4)
- b. REL 4939 Development of Religious Studies (4)
- c. An additional 11 credit hours chosen from Religious Studies courses. Students are expected to study at least two different religious traditions.

It is the prerogative of the Department of Religious Studies to determine whether courses taken at other universities may be applied toward the minor at USF. This will be decided as soon as the student declares a minor in the Department of Religious Studies at USF.

Requirements for the Honors Program in Religious Studies

The purpose of the Honors Program in Religious Studies is to provide outstanding undergraduates with advanced and individualized learning opportunities in Religious Studies and their areas of special interest in this field. In addition it will serve to facilitate more direct contact between students in the program and their faculty mentors. In this program, students who have demonstrated significant academic achievement will inquire into issues and questions in the study of religion at an advanced level under the guidance of faculty members with demonstrated expertise in their fields of study and a strong commitment to teaching. Upon completion of the program, the student's transcript will state that the student graduated with Honors in Religious Studies. Application to the program should be submitted during a student's Junior year. The Honors Committee will review all applicants before selecting no more than 10 individuals for the Honors Programs. Inductees will be notified of their admission to the Honors Program in the Spring term. Honors Program students are exempt from Sr. Seminar (REL 4931) contingent on their completion of the Honors Program. If students do not complete the Honors Program, they are required to complete Sr. Seminar in order to satisfy degree requirements.

Admissions Criteria:

1. Religious Studies majors who have completed at least 70 (and preferably less than 90) hours of course work with an overall GPA of at least 3.25.
2. Completion of REL 3003 Introduction to Religion and at least 12 additional hours of course work in the department of Religious Studies with a GPA of at least 3.5 in the major.
3. A letter of recommendation from a Religious Studies faculty member who is familiar with the applicant's work.
4. A statement from a Religious Studies faculty member expressing her/his willingness to serve as chair of the applicant's thesis committee.
5. A short essay (2-3) pages by the applicant that includes the following: (a) a statement of the applicant's qualifications for the program, (b) the applicant's area(s) of special interest, (c) an explanation of how the program will benefit from the applicant's inclusion in the program, and (d) the applicant's post-graduate plans.

Requirements for Completion of the Departmental Honors

1. Completion of the requirements for a Religious Studies major with a GPA of 3.5 or higher in the major.
2. Completion of a USF degree with an overall GPA of 3.25 or higher.

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3. Completion of 5 credit hours of "Honors Seminar." Honors students will take the seminar for 3 credit hours in the Fall and 2 credit hours in the Spring.
4. Completion of 5 credit hours of Thesis/Directed Research for 2 credit hours in the Fall and 3 credit hours in the Spring. Honors students must also complete and defend their Honors thesis in the second semester of their Senior year. Students who do not complete this requirement may, upon the recommendation of their major professor and the Department Honors Program Coordinator, be allowed to continue in special circumstances.

Required Courses for the Minor:

REL 4910 Undergraduate Research	(2)
REL 4911 Undergraduate Research	(3)
REL 4937 Selected Topics: Fall Honors Seminar	(3)
REL 4938 Selected Topics: Spring Honors Seminar	(2)