

# Religious Studies



WASHINGTON  
& JEFFERSON  
COLLEGE

As our communities become progressively interconnected and diverse, it also becomes increasingly important to have an **understanding of religious and cultural worldviews of our neighbors, fellow students, and co-workers**. By introducing students to **diverse religious traditions**, the Religious Studies minor contributes to their professional success and their intellectual and civic development. The minor draws courses from **multiple academic disciplines** and pairs well with a wide range of majors in natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, business, and communication arts.

## Minor Requirements

The Religious Studies minor consists of five courses, including:

- At least one foundational course, such as:
  - World Religions (REL 104)
  - Religion in America (REL 102)
  - Faith and Reason (PHL 145)
- At least one comparative course or a course with a primary focus on non-Western religious traditions, such as:
  - Eastern Religious Traditions (REL 106)
  - Intro to Buddhism (REL 207)
  - Religion, the Body, and Sexuality (REL 274)
- At least one 300-level course, such as:
  - Religion and Social Justice (REL 307)
  - Ancient Greek Religions (REL 305)
  - Europe Transformed: Renaissance and Reformation (HIS 302)
  - Holocaust Literature (ENG 355)

## Sample Religious Studies Courses

Additional Religious Studies courses include:

- World Art I and II (ARH 101/102)
- Faith in Poetry (ENG 226)
- Classical Philosophy (PHL 201)
- Human Origin-Scientific and Christian Perspectives (REL 115)
- The Hebrew Bible in Context (REL 201)
- The New Testament in Context (REL 202)
- Introduction to Judaism (REL 203)
- Introduction to Christianity (REL 204)
- Introduction to Islam (REL 205)
- Topics in Biblical Studies (REL 208)
- Religion and Film (REL 215)
- Death and Immortality (REL 217)
- Religion and the Environment (REL 237)
- Religion and Food (REL 247)
- Religion and Race (REL 247)

## Program Director

Olga Solovieva, Ph.D.  
osolovieva@washjeff.edu

## Affiliated Faculty

Cynthia Hogan, Ph.D.  
chogan@washjeff.edu

Ketaki Jaywant, Ph.D.  
kjaywant@washjeff.edu

Ian Lanzillotti, Ph.D.  
ilanzillotti@washjeff.edu

Victoria List, J.D., Ph.D.  
vlist@washjeff.edu

Steven Malinak, Ph.D.  
smalinak@washjeff.edu

Gregg Osborne, Ph.D.  
gosborne@washjeff.edu

Todd Verdun, Ph.D.  
tverdun@washjeff.edu

## Why Minor in Religious Studies?

- Gain a better understanding and appreciation of other people's cultures and worldviews. (Good for being an effective co-worker and manager, awesome friend and neighbor, and a responsible citizen!)
- Develop skills essential to successful academic and professional careers: critical analysis, independent research skills, interdisciplinary thinking, and written and verbal communication skills.
- Ace graduate admission tests (GRE, LSAT, MCAT) and impress admissions committees with your unique academic background.
- Become employable in 30+ professional fields, including education, healthcare, government, counseling, social work, international business, chaplaincy, and law.

## Benefits of a Religious Studies Minor

- Religious Studies graduates are among the top performers on the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) and have a higher than average rate of acceptance into law schools (The University of Alabama).
- According to the AMC annual report on medical school acceptance rates for 2022, it was higher than average (51%) for students with a humanities background, which includes Religious Studies.
- According to the nation-wide data study on career outcomes for Religious Studies alumni, 82.5% were currently employed, 8.6% were not seeking employment, and 8.9% were not currently employed (Teagle Foundation/ AAR Study, 2015).

## Major Pairings

- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Political Science     | • Modern Languages      |
| • Communication Arts    | • English               |
| • Environmental Studies | • International Studies |
| • Economics             |                         |



## Program Website

[washjeff.edu/religious-studies](http://washjeff.edu/religious-studies)

Theodore Somes '20 graduated with a minor in Religious Studies. He went



on to study at Virginia Theological Seminary, where he obtained a Master of Divinity. He is now a Candidate for Holy Orders in the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Theodore serves as a Chaplain Candidate in the U.S. Army Reserve, serving the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne) in White Plains, MD. His minor in Religious Studies is especially useful in the multireligious military environment, where his job includes vetting religious accommodations and providing religious support to paratroopers regardless of faith. In the civilian world, Somes works

as the Lay Assistant for Christian Formation at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Mt. Lebanon (Pittsburgh, PA).