



Curricular Programs in Interfaith and Interreligious Studies

As part of a three-year project funded by the Teagle Foundation, IFYC has partnered with seventeen colleges and universities to develop academic programs in interfaith and interreligious studies. Utilizing grant funds, these institutions have garnered support and convened colleagues to create curricular programs – including majors, minors, concentrations, certificates, and course sequences – that focus on interfaith and interreligious engagement. The goal of this resource is to highlight the diverse range of academic programs in interfaith and interreligious studies that now exist at both public and private undergraduate institutions.

Featured Programs

This resource brings together materials from grant reports, program plans, and promotional materials developed by each of the profiled campuses; these materials reflect the voices, character, and priorities of the individuals and institutions involved in these programs:

[California State University \(CSU\) Chico – Certificate in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations](#)

California State University Chico is a public institution located in Chico, California, with an undergraduate population of over 15,000. CSU Chico has created an interdisciplinary Certificate in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations. The certificate includes five academic courses, a senior internship in religious diversity, and one course regarding religious diversity in a professional or disciplinary context.

[Saint Mary's College of California – Interfaith Leadership Minor](#)

Saint Mary's College of California is a private institution affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. It is located in Moraga, California, and serves about 2,800 undergraduate students. The college launched an interdisciplinary Interfaith Leadership Minor in the fall of 2015, which is housed within the School of Economics and Business Administration. The minor consists of 6.25 courses, which includes four courses regarding the intersection of interfaith cooperation and anthropology, business, ethics, communication, and psychology, two interdisciplinary electives, and a quarter-credit interfaith leadership praxis course.

[Elizabethtown College – Interfaith Leadership Studies Major](#)

Elizabethtown College is a private institution affiliated with the Church of the Brethren. It is located in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, and serves about 1,900 undergraduate students. Elizabethtown launched the country's first major in Interfaith Leadership Studies in the fall of 2015, which includes six required courses centered around interfaith leadership, two courses in religious literacy, three courses related to religious diversity and civil society, and two courses in professional skills and experiential learning.

[Oklahoma City University \(OCU\) – Interfaith Studies Minor](#)

Oklahoma City University is a private institution affiliated with the United Methodist Church. It is located in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and serves about 2,300 undergraduate students. OCU has created an

interdisciplinary Interfaith Studies Minor, which launched in the fall of 2015. Replacing their pre-existing World Religions Minor, the Interfaith Studies Minor is housed in the Wimberly School of Religion and consists of six courses: two religion courses, three electives (at least one of which must be taken outside of the School of Religion), and an internship in an interfaith setting.

University of Toledo – Interreligious Studies Concentration within Religious Studies Major

The University of Toledo is a public research university located in Toledo, Ohio, and serves over 18,000 undergraduate students. Toledo has developed an Interreligious Studies Concentration, which is housed within the Religious Studies Major. The concentration consists of 12 credit hours, selected from courses in multiple disciplines including religious studies, philosophy, peace and justice, film, and history. This concentration provides a more extended study of interreligious dynamics by way of case studies, theory, community service, and internships.

Please note that at the time of publication, not all of the featured programs have been finalized or implemented. For this reason, some program descriptions are written in future tense.

Tell us about the interfaith studies program you are considering or creating, or get in touch with us to learn more about others doing the same. Visit www.ifyc.org/resources for more resources.



Certificate in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations

California State University, Chico

Program Lead: Dr. Kate McCarthy, Professor of Comparative Religion

Rationale

Religious conflict often is, or is perceived to be, at the heart of America's most persistent social tensions, from Lower Manhattan to Rowan County, Kentucky. On a global scale, a recent Pew Research report confirms that religious conflict has reached a six year high, as indicated by government restrictions on and social conflicts involving religion (Pew Research Center 2014). Unfortunately, very few Americans have the education and practical training to effectively work with religion in a way that is socially engaged and explicitly pluralist in orientation (Pew Forum 2010). In the absence of such education, public discourse around religion often devolves into ideological wrangling that obscures both shared religious values and the complexity and internal diversity of religious and non-religious groups. A curriculum focused on religious diversity in pluralist societies is therefore a timely initiative. This undergraduate certificate program will equip students in a variety of programs with value-added competencies suitable to a range of professional activities involving religiously diverse populations, including education, healthcare, social services and community development, business, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as those wishing to pursue further academic research in religion and ancillary fields.

Relation to CSU, Chico Strategic Plan

This program speaks directly to Chico State's deeply held values and commitments regarding active learning, multicultural understanding, and civic engagement. Our Strategic Plan states that "We promote active learning, curiosity, and the recognition that learning occurs in our classrooms, studios, and laboratories, and beyond, through the co-curricular experience, service engagements, social interactions, and other expressions of a full and healthy student environment." The first of the University's Strategic Priorities operationalizes this value: "Believing in the primacy of learning, we will continue to develop high-quality learning environments both inside and outside the classroom." As a program focused on religion in public life, the certificate's coursework and required internship will include robust opportunities for students to connect theory and practice across disciplinary lines and in real world settings. Our Strategic Plan also states, "We hold dear the values of multicultural respect, awareness, and understanding and we pursue diversity not just as an idea to embrace, but as a community to form." Religious diversity is an important but often neglected aspect of identity in pluralist societies; this curriculum will equip students with both religious literacy and tools for facilitating constructive engagement across lines of religious difference to help build that diverse community.

The Certificate in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations will also incorporate the High Impact Practices of diversity/global learning, community-based learning about real world problems, and professionally oriented internships (AAC&U 2008). In addition, this certificate would support the university's commitment to developing students' personal and social responsibility, which research shows is developed by engaging in meaningful dialogue across lines of difference (O'Neil 2012).

Why a Certificate?

This program aims to complement rather than replace a student's chosen field of study; it is intended to draw together work on religion that they may already have done in general education with work in their major, and add to these sustained study and practice in interreligious relations. Research into the difference between certificates and minors at universities across the United States indicates that certificates are typically

(a) more interdisciplinary and (b) more applied; and (c) often have a more narrow focus than a disciplinary minor. All of these factors make the certificate a more appropriate curricular model for this program. Over 10 different departments have courses listed in this program; we aim to enrich the degrees of students in a variety of majors with deeper knowledge of an important aspect of the societies in which they will work and opportunities to practice navigating that diversity in real-world settings.

Relation to Other Programs

Interfaith/interreligious studies is a quickly growing field, defined by scholar and interfaith leader Eboo Patel this way:

As an academic field, interfaith studies would examine the multiple dimensions of how individuals and groups who orient around religion differently interact with one another, along with the implications of these interactions for communities, civil society, and global politics. (Patel 2013)

To date, however, this discipline has developed as a program of study primarily at private colleges and universities. No other CSU offers such a certificate (or major or minor), nor do any other institutions in the region. When this certificate is approved, Chico State will be one of the first public four-year institutions in the country to offer a program in interreligious relations.

The Department of Comparative Religion and Humanities, while it has a small number of majors, is responsible for a large part of the University's General Education curriculum; most students take at least one Religious Studies course before graduating. Students who pursue the major in Religious Studies engage in in-depth study of the histories, texts, ritual and social structures and contemporary manifestations of religious traditions worldwide. While it is one of the program goals of the major to "cultivate understanding of and respect for religious diversity and non-religious perspectives as an integral part of education for citizenship in a pluralistic society and world," this is done over the course of years of study, and is only one of a much broader set of comparative religion objectives. Students in other disciplines, especially those with a pre-professional focus, may be interested in issues of religious diversity, but not have the time or inclination to add a full humanities-style element to their course of study. This certificate would meet the needs of those students, as well as those Religious Studies majors seeking to focus in this particular area.

In relation to the existing religious studies major and minor, then, the distinctive features of the proposed certificate are (1) its sustained attention to the interaction between different religious and non-religious groups, and (2) its multi-disciplinary and practical focus on real-world issues and challenges faced by those working in pluralist societies. The program will be academically rigorous, religiously neutral, and demonstrably linked to recognized civic and professional outcomes.

While there are other academic programs on campus, including the major and minors in Multicultural and Gender Studies, that foster engagement with racial/ethnic, gender, and socio-economic class diversity, this certificate brings attention to religious difference as a highly socially consequential dimension of diversity. Faculty from MCGS and other programs have been involved in the development of this proposal and have helped ensure that its curriculum integrates and supports existing offerings without duplication.

Student Demand for the Program

We administered a campus-wide student survey in December 2014 to gauge student interest in the proposed certificate. Of the 335 students who responded, over 85% of those surveyed thought the certificate was a good idea and almost 40% indicated that they would be interested in pursuing the program if it were available to them (141 students). Given the small size of our Religious Studies major (about 25 students) these are very



robust numbers. We infer from the survey that religious diversity is of interest to students when it is framed for them as an additional competency that will serve them both personally and professionally.

Program Goals

This undergraduate certificate program will equip students in a variety of programs with value-added competencies suitable to a range of professional activities involving religiously diverse populations, including education, health care, social services and community development, international business, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as those wishing to pursue further academic research in religion and ancillary fields. Students earning this certificate will develop:

1. Knowledge base about major religious traditions
2. Understanding of how religious identities intersect with those of ethnicity, nationality, gender, and other aspects of identity
3. Appreciation of some of the global history of both conflict and cooperation among religious and non-religious groups
4. Skills in inter-cultural communication and collaboration across lines of difference
5. The opportunity to study and apply inter-religious and inter-cultural engagement in a real-world setting appropriate to the students' areas of interest or expertise.

These goals will be achieved through the following student learning outcomes.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students completing this certificate can:

- Describe the basic beliefs and practices of major world religious traditions and how they intersect with diverse social identities (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, class);
- Describe historical patterns of interreligious conflict and cooperation, and apply theoretical models to understand them;
- Identify laws, policies, and ethical and cultural frameworks that create barriers and opportunities for diverse religious groups; and
- Participate in and facilitate effective dialogue among those with different religious or non-religious backgrounds and identities.

Curriculum Overview (21-22 units, 15 Upper Division)

1. 1 course in World Religions (3 units)
2. 1 course in Multicultural Relations (3 units)
3. 2 upper division courses in Religion and Social Issues (6 units)
4. RELS 366: Interreligious Conflict and Cooperation (new course) (3 units)
5. 1 upper division course in religious diversity in a Professional or Disciplinary Context (3 units)
6. 1 senior Internship in Religious Diversity (3 units)

Detailed Course List

1. **1 Course in World Religions** (3 units)
 - **RELS 180:** Introduction to Religion
 - **RELS 100:** Judaism, Christianity, Islam

- **RELS 110:** Asian Religions
 - **RELS 202:** Islam and the World
 - **RELS 205:** Jews, Muslims, and the West
 - **RELS 212:** Religions of India
 - **RELS 224:** Religion and America's Ethnic Minorities
 - **RELS 264:** Death, Dying and the Afterlife
 - **ANTH 140:** Magic, Witchcraft, Religion
2. **1 Course in Multicultural Relations** (3 units)
 - **MCGS 155:** Introduction to Multicultural and Gender Studies (U.S. focus)
 - **INST 110:** Introduction to International Engagement (global focus)
 3. **2 Upper Division Courses in Religion and Social Issues** (3 units)
 - **RELS 180:** Introduction to Religion
 - **ANTH 377:** Anthropology of the Muslim World
 - **GEOG 303:** Geography and World Affairs
 - **GEOG 352:** US Regional Geography
 - **RELS 322:** Religion in America
 - **RELS 332:** World Religions and Global Issues
 - **RELS 402:** Religion, Sex, and Gender
 4. **RELS 3XX: Interreligious Conflict and Cooperation** (3 units)
 5. **1 Upper Division Course in Religious Diversity in a Professional or Disciplinary Context** (3 units)
 - **CHLD 333:** Children's Gender and Sexuality Development
 - **EDTE 302:** Access and Equity in Education
 - **HCSV 328:** Multicultural Health
 - **JOUR 411:** Race and Diversity in Media
 - **JOUR 424/CMST 424/POLS 424:** Public Opinion and Propaganda
 - **MCGS/PSYC 341:** Cross-Cultural Psychology
 - **RELS 358:** Religion in American Public Schools
 - **RELS 482:** Religion in the Professions
 - **SWRK 305:** Community and Organizational Change
 - **MGMT 442:** Managing Differences
 6. **1 Senior Internship in Religious Diversity** (3 units)
 - **RELS 489:** Internship in Religious Studies (specific version focused on religious diversity)
 - **UNIV 389:** Civic Engagement Internship
 - Internships from other departments with courses in the program, as approved by the Certificate Coordinator

References

- American Association of Colleges and Universities (2008). "High Impact Educational Practices: A Brief Overview." <http://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>.
- O'Neil, N. (2012). "Promising Practices for Personal and Social Responsibility: Findings from a National Research Collaborative." American Association of Colleges and Universities. http://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/core_commitments/promising_practices_rc2012.pdf.
- Patel, Eboo (2013). "Toward a Field of Interfaith Studies." *Liberal Education* 99:4 (Fall). <https://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/2013/fall/patel>.
- PEW Forum on Religion and Public Life (2010). "U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey: Executive Summary." <http://www.pewforum.org/2010/09/28/u-s-religious-knowledge-survey>.
- Pew Research Center (2014). "Religious Hostilities Reach Six-Year High." <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2014/01/RestrictionsV-full-report.pdf>.

Interfaith Leadership Minor

Saint Mary's College of California

Program Lead: Dr. Barbara McGraw, Professor of Social Ethics, Law, and Public Life

Program Introduction

Today where cross-cultural and cross-religious contacts are nearly ubiquitous, professionals in various sectors (e.g., healthcare, law, business, education, NGOs, government service and public policy) are beginning to recognize the need to address the religious and spiritual dimensions of their work not only to serve more compassionately and effectively, but also to contribute to the evolution of a more inclusive and just society.

The Interfaith Leadership Minor is an interdisciplinary program that provides students with a set of competencies and perspectives to begin to understand what is at stake in our religiously diverse world and how to make a difference in it in their own lives and in whatever careers they pursue.

Those who develop the capacities of interfaith leadership understand that religion can be a source of conflict or an invitation to cooperation, and they know how to lead others toward the latter.

Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this program will be able to:

- **Identity/Bias:** Reflect on students' own and others' identity formation and perspective; articulate how religious and other identities and worldviews affect perceptions of issues that arise in various environments and situations; and articulate how such perceptions can result in bias.
- **Communication/Dialogue:** Demonstrate effective communication and dialogue facilitation skills that can be used to address interreligious conflict and promote interfaith cooperation, engagement, and understanding.
- **Religious Literacy:** Demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be religiously literate; articulate ways that religions differ in thought, practice, and organization; and articulate the meaning of "pluralism" in this context.
- **Leadership:** Identify interfaith challenges and opportunities; propose inclusive methods for addressing them; and articulate how to lead implementation of those inclusive methods.
- **Application:** Demonstrate interfaith leadership (as defined above) in a collaborative community-based project.

Minor Requirements

To graduate with an Interfaith Leadership Minor, students must complete courses in the following Program Core, which consists of four full credit courses and one quarter credit project course. Students must also complete Two Electives, one from each of two elective categories.

Program Core

Four Full Credit Courses and One Quarter Credit Project Course:

1. Choose one:
 - **Anthropology 001** - Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology
 - **Ethic Studies 001** - Introduction to Ethnic Studies

2. Business Administration 108 - Interfaith Leadership in Business and the Professions

3. Choose one:

- **Communication 106** - Intercultural Communication
- **Ethnic Studies 155** - Advanced Intergroup Dialogue

4. Choose one:

- **Justice, Community, and Leadership 150** - Advanced Leadership Theory
- **Business Administration 131** - Managing and Leading Organizations
- **Psychology 172** - Groups, Organizations, and Societies

5. Interfaith Leadership 120 - Interfaith Leadership Praxis (.25 credit)

This is a field-based course required for students who plan to complete the Interfaith Leadership Minor. Through the integration of the Interfaith Leadership Minor learning outcomes, students receive hands-on experience in developing and conducting a project that involves building bridges of understanding and cooperation across boundaries of religious, spiritual, and/or non-faith differences. The course instructor and the enrolled student(s) work together in the development of the project, the implementation of which will be the student(s)' primary responsibility. Depending on the number of eligible students, this course may be conducted as an independent study or involve students working together in teams. Prerequisites: All four Program Core full credit courses. Offered annually spring semester.

Two Electives, One from Each of Two Categories

Category One: Interfaith in Context Elective - Choose one course from the following:

- **Kinesiology 118:** Issues in Community Health
- **Psychology 150:** Personality Psychology
- **Global and Regional Studies 001:** Introduction to Global and Regional Studies
- **History 162:** Modern China
- **History 163:** Ethnic Identity and Conflict in China
- **Politics 115:** Theories of Justice
- **Politics 143:** Middle East Politics

Category Two: Enhanced Learning Outcome Elective - Choose One Course from the following:

- **Anth 001:** Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology
- **ES 001:** Introduction to Ethnic Studies
- **JCL 150:** Advanced Leadership Theory
- **Busad 131:** Managing and Leading Organizations
- **Psych 172:** Groups, Organizations, and Societies
- **Comm 106:** Intercultural Communication
- **ES 155:** Advanced Intergroup Dialogue – Peer Facilitator Training
- **Anth 117:** Religion
- **Psych 163:** Prejudice and Stereotyping
- **TRS 104:** Challenge of Modernity
- **TRS 151:** Judaism
- **TRS 152:** Islam: Beliefs and Practices
- **TRS 153:** Eastern Religions
- **TRS 154:** Hinduism
- **TRS 155:** Buddhism



Interfaith Leadership Studies Major

Elizabethtown College

Program Lead: Rev. Dr. Tracy Sadd, Religious Life Chaplain and Lecturer in Religious Studies

The goal of Interfaith Leadership Studies at Elizabethtown College is to create a cadre of skilled professionals across sectors of the economy who can serve and lead in effective ways in a world in which diverse worldviews—both religious and non-religious—are in constant interaction.

Why Study Interfaith Leadership Studies at Elizabethtown?

- According to Chicago-based Interfaith Youth Core, our Interfaith Leadership Studies major is the first academic major in the nation in this new and growing field.
- In his speech to the United Nations on September 24, 2014, President Obama called for interfaith action to combat religious extremism and terrorism. Interfaith leadership and service are increasingly important in the arena of global politics, but also matter greatly in local communities, suburbs, and cities.
- The new Interfaith Leadership Studies major supports the mission of Elizabethtown College specifically as it relates to educating students ethically for lives of leadership and service as citizens of the world.
- Dr. Jeffery Long, professor of religion at Elizabethtown College, publishes and speaks internationally on the subject of religious pluralism.
- The Chaplain's Office, and a number of student groups, have participated in the White House Interfaith and Community Service Challenge since 2011.
- Our Interfaith Leadership Studies major is interdisciplinary, including coursework in business, history, political science, sociology, and even biology.

Outcomes

Each student's unique sense of passion and purpose, as well as his or her choice of an additional academic major or minor will help to determine the right graduate school or the best pathway to begin a professional career upon graduation.

We want graduates of our program to become leaders in community development, government and non-governmental agencies, religious and faith-based organizations, and national and international organizations, both non-profit and for-profit. The Interfaith Leadership Studies major also will make an excellent preparation for students who want to pursue a path towards ministry—be it pastoral ministry or chaplaincy.

Internship and Research Opportunities

The required internship and required capstone applied project will help students in their search for the desired graduate program or job immediately after graduation.

Our program encourages students to study abroad for a semester or participate in short-term, service-learning overseas trips.

Program Requirements

The Interfaith Leadership Studies major consists of 13 courses totaling no fewer than 42 credits.

6 Required Courses:

- **ILS 105:** Exploring Interfaith Leadership and Service (4.00 credits)
- **PCS 160:** Conflict Dynamics and Transformation (4.00 credits)
- **ILS 330:** Comparative Theology and Interfaith Engagement (4.00 credits)
- **ILS 470:** Internship in Interfaith Leadership (4.00 credits)
- **ILS 490:** Capstone Seminar in Interfaith Leadership Studies (2.00 credits)
- **ILS 491:** Project in Interfaith Leadership Studies (2.00 credits)

Religious Literacy, Appreciative Understanding, and Shared Values

Choose 2 courses from the following:

- **REL 103:** Religion and Nonviolence (4.00 credits)
- **REL 287:** Introduction to History and Thought of Christianity (4.00 credits)
- **REL 290:** Dharma Traditions (4.00 credits)
- **REL 293:** Islam (4.00 credits)

Religious Diversity, Civil Society, and World Politics

Choose 3 courses from the following from at least 2 different disciplines:

- **AN 111:** Understanding Human Cultures (4.00 credits)
- **BIO 320:** Conservation Biology (4.00 credits)
- **HI 320:** Middle East in Modern Times (4.00 credits)
- **HI 321:** North Africa in Modern Times (4.00 credits)
- **INT 331:** Peace and War in a Global World (4.00 credits)
- **PS 211:** Political Psychology (4.00 credits)
- **PS 240:** Foundations of American Democracy (4.00 credits)
- **PSY 235:** Social Psychology (4.00 credits)
- **REL 331:** Ethnicity, Gender, and Religion (4.00 credits)
- **REL 344:** Ethics of Martin Luther King, Jr. (4.00 credits)
- **REL 391:** Hinduism and Modernity (4.00 credits)
- **SO 204:** Population and Global Issues (4.00 credits)

Professional Skills and Experiential Learning

Choose 2 courses from the following from at least two different disciplines:

- **BA 215:** Marketing (4.00 credits)
- **BA 265:** Organizational Management (4.00 credits)
- **PCS 260:** Peacebuilding Themes and Trends (4.00 credits)
- **PS 245:** International Relations (4.00 credits)
- **SO 317:** Sociology of Religion (4.00 credits)



Interfaith Studies Minor

Oklahoma City University

Program Leads: Dr. Sharon Betsworth, Director of the Wimberly School of Religion and Professor of Religion, and Dr. Lisa Wolfe, Professor of Religion

As a United Methodist affiliated institution, the Wimberly School of Religion has a long history of teaching about other faiths, and it is a part of the denomination's history as well. Since 1980, the United Methodist Church has had an [official resolution](#) recommending how United Methodists ought to interact with persons of other faith traditions (The United Methodist Book of Resolutions, 2012). The Interfaith Studies Minor not only fulfills the mission of the university regarding welcoming persons of all faiths, but also educates our students in a range of issues regarding religion, religious identity, and practice, and the intersection between religion and society. It fulfills the strategic plan of the School of Religion to equip our students with the skills necessary to be informed, engaged world citizens.

Objectives

- Gain a broad overview of the world's major religious traditions
- Develop appreciative knowledge of diverse religious traditions, seeking understanding along lines of difference
- Examine the shared values of diverse religious traditions in our contemporary culture
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of how religions impact the social and political landscape
- Demonstrate leadership skills in communities or organizations consisting of persons or groups who orient around religion differently

Assessment

The assessment for the minor will follow the assessment plan for other programs in the School of Religion. Our assessment utilizes quantitative data based upon students' classroom performance. This assessment system is based upon the objectives of the major/minor. Faculty complete an assessment form for each student who have taken a course which fulfills the major/minor requirements. We then collate the data to assess the major/minor.

Requirements of the Minor

Required Courses (6 hours):

(At least one course must be a Service Learning course)

- **REL 2513:** Introduction to World Religions
- **REL 4253:** Religious Pluralism and Interreligious Dialogue

Electives

12 hours of electives in approved courses:

- At least 6 hours at the 3000-4000 level
- At least 3 hours outside of the School of Religion
- Can include up to 3 hours of REL 4981 Internship in Religion in an Interfaith setting

Elective Courses

1. Courses from the School of Religion could include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- **2103:** Introduction to Judaism
- **2203:** Introduction to Islam
- **2413:** Philosophy of Religion
- **2503:** Religion in American History
- **3313:** Religion in Contemporary America
- **3213:** Religion and Science
- **3503:** Modern Jewish Thought
- **3513:** The Jewish Experience in America
- **3703:** Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust
- **4203:** Primal Religions
- **4213:** Hinduism
- **4223:** Buddhism
- **4233:** Chinese Religions
- **4243:** Survey of the Quran
- **4403:** History of Islam in America

2. Courses from across the university could include, but are not limited to:

- **LAS 1063:** An approved Liberal Arts Seminar
- **ADPR 2073:** Faith and Addiction
- **CAST 3113:** Global Child Advocacy Issues
- **ENGL 2013:** Classical Mythology
- **ENGL 2713:** Survey of American Literature, Colonial to Civil War
- **ENGL 2903:** Literature in the Judeo-Christian Tradition
- **ENGL 2913:** Spirituality and Literature
- **JUS 2113:** Social Justice
- **JUS 3953:** Gender, Violence, and Society
- **POLS 1013:** Comparative Politics
- **POLS 3263:** Politics of the Middle East
- **POLS 3803:** Political Islam
- **SOC/REL:** Sociology of Religion



Interreligious Studies Concentration within Religious Studies Minor

University of Toledo

Program Lead: Dr. Jeanine Diller, Director of the Center for Religious Understanding and Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Program on Religious Studies

There is a direct fit between interreligious studies and the mission of the University of Toledo, viz., “to improve the human condition.” If news headlines are not clues enough, the 2014 Pew Report “Religious Hostilities Reach Six-Year High” demonstrates in a single document the pressing global need for greater understanding about how to handle disagreements about religion occurring in individual, social and political contexts. Our new concentration in interreligious studies will train UT religion majors to understand diverse orientations to religion, use multiple disciplinary tools to examine what happens when people who disagree about religion interact, and practice handling religious diversity in practical settings through community service and internships. Our ardent hope is that this new course of study will equip our students to improve the human condition specifically by defusing interreligious tensions and growing interreligious peace locally, domestically, or internationally.

To accomplish this end and on the advice of our student focus group under this grant, we submitted curricular changes to convert our former, casual “focal areas” within the Religious Studies B.A. program into formal concentrations that will appear on student transcripts, with lists of identified courses to fulfill them, we added a new concentration in Interreligious Studies among them.

The requirements for the B.A. in Religious Studies already work to guarantee broad religious literacy in all our majors, with a required Introduction to Religion, followed by 3 hours required in each of Judaism and Christianity, Islam, Eastern Thought and Philosophy of Religion (for fluency with non-religious perspectives). The Interreligious Studies concentration will build on this broad base by inviting students to dedicate 12 of their 15 elective hours in the major toward the following coursework:

- **REL 3210:** Ancient & Medieval Philosophy, 3 hours
- **REL 3510:** Comparative Religion, 3 hours
- **REL 4900:** Religion, Violence & Peace iteration, 3 hours
- **REL 4920:** Directed Reading in Religious Studies, interreligious focus
- **REL 4940:** Internship in Religious Studies, interreligious focus
- Interdisciplinary courses in Interreligious Studies including:
 - **Hist 3980:** Muslims, Christians & Jews in Medieval Spain
 - **PJS 1000:** Introduction to Peace & Justice Studies
 - **Film 3980:** Cinema & the Sacred

Additional Contextual Information about the Religious Studies Major at the University of Toledo:

Required Courses (7 hours):

- **REL 2000:** Introduction to Religion (3 hours)
- **REL 3750:** Philosophy of Religion (3 hours)
- **REL XX:** Pro-Seminar (1 hour)

Distribution Requirements (9 hours):

Students must take at least one course in each of the following distributions, with at least one course taken at the 3000-4000 level. The student may petition their advisor to have other courses substituted for the list below in fulfillment of the distribution requirement.

Group One: Judaism and Christianity (3 hours)

- **REL 2310:** Old Testament/Tanakh
- **REL 2330:** New Testament
- **REL 2350:** Authority and the Bible
- **REL 2410:** Intro. to Christian Thought
- **REL 3420:** Christian Ethical Perspectives
- **REL 3080:** Jewish Biblical Studies
- **REL 3670:** Christian Ritual and Worship

Group Two: Islam (3 hours)

- **REL 2300:** Understanding Monotheism
- **REL 2980:** Intro. to Islam
- **REL 3350:** Qur'an and Hadith
- **REL 3580:** Cont. Issues in Islam

Group Three: Eastern Religion (3 hours)

- **REL 3500:** Eastern Thought
- **REL 3520:** Zen Philosophy

Electives (15 hours)

All majors take 15 hours of electives, i.e. any 2000-4000 level REL course not counted toward the above requirements. At least 6 hours of these 15 hours must be taken at the 4000 level. Students may consider directing some of these hours toward a concentration, toward a Religious Studies Internship REL 4940 ideally taken concurrently with the Proseminar, or toward a Senior Thesis for Honors REL 4960 if pursuing departmental honors.

Optional: Concentration Areas (12 hours)

Students may opt to dedicate 12 hours toward a concentration in one of the four sub-fields of religious studies below to receive a B.A. degree in religious studies with a concentration in this subfield. Students may also opt out of concentrating to receive a B.A. in religious studies per se. Distribution courses, elective courses, courses in related fields and independent studies that align with the concentration in question can all count toward a concentration with prior approval of the advisor.

1. Christian Studies

12 hours related to the study of Christianity, selected from courses including but not limited to):

- **REL 2300:** Understanding Monotheism (3 hours)
- **REL 2310:** Old Testament/Tanakh (3 hours)
- **REL 2330:** New Testament (3 hours)
- **REL 2350:** Authority and the Bible (3 hours)
- **REL 2380:** Topics in Catholic Thought (3 hours)
- **REL 2410:** Intro. to Christian Thought (3 hours)
- **REL 3210:** Ancient & Medieval Philosophy (3 hours)
- **REL 3420:** Christian Ethical Perspectives (3 hours)
- **REL 3670:** Christian Ritual and Worship (3 hours)

2. Islamic Studies

12 hours related to the study of Islam, selected from courses including but not limited to:

- **REL 2300:** Understanding Monotheism (3 hours)
- **REL 2980:** Introduction to Islam (3 hours)



- **REL 3210:** Ancient & Medieval Philosophy (3 hours)
- **REL 3100:** Islam (3 hours)
- **REL 3350:** Qur'an and Hadith (3 hours)
- **REL 3580:** Contemporary Issues in Islam (3 hours)
- **REL 4520:** History of the Middle East, 600-1500 (3 hours)

3. Interreligious Studies

12 hours related to the study of interreligion, selected from courses including but not limited to:

- **REL 3210:** Ancient & Medieval Philosophy (3 hours)
- **REL 3510:** Comparative Religion (3 hours)
- **REL 4900:** Religion, Violence & Peace iteration (3 hours)
- **REL 4920:** Directed Reading in Religious Studies, interreligious focus
- **REL 4940:** Internship in Religious Studies, interreligious focus
- Interdisciplinary courses in Interreligious Studies including:
 - **HIST 3980:** Muslims, Christians & Jews in Medieval Spain
 - **PJS 1000:** Introduction to Peace & Justice Studies
 - **Film 3980:** Cinema & the Sacred

4. Philosophy of Religion

12 hours related to the study of philosophy of religion, selected from courses including but not limited to:

- **PHIL 1010:** Introduction to Logic (3 hours) **or** PHIL 1020: Critical Thinking (3 hours)
- **PHIL 2200:** Introduction to Philosophy (3 hours)
- **PHIL 3000:** Symbolic Logic (3 hours)
- **PHIL/REL 3210:** Ancient & Medieval Philosophy (3 hours)
- **PHIL 3230:** Modern Philosophy (3 hours)
- **REL 3570:** Philosophy of Religion (3 hours)
- 4000-level seminars cross-listed in PHIL/REL (3 hours each)
 - **PHIL/REL 4500:** Buddhist Philosophy (3 hours)
 - **PHIL/REL 4920:** Directed Reading (philosophy of religion focus) (3 hours)
 - **PHIL/REL 4990:** Independent Study (philosophy of religion focus) (3 hours)

Meet with the departmental major adviser to discuss the qualifications and to develop a plan to meet the honors requirements. May be combined with any concentration or not. Requires:

- A 3.0 cumulative GPA and junior or senior status in order to seek honors
- A 3.4 minimum cumulative GPA in REL courses. Transfer courses are not included
- **REL 4960:** Honors Thesis
- Paper from 4000-level Honors seminar course

Related Courses (18 hours)

Students must take 18 hours of related courses outside the Religious Studies program that have been approved by the student's advisor. A minimum of 9 of these hours must be taken at the 3000 level or above. A Minor or major in another department may be used to satisfy the related courses requirement.