DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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More Information: https://religion.case.edu/

The academic study of religion at Case Western Reserve University is multicultural, non-sectarian, and both disciplinary and interdisciplinary. Students examine a range of past and present cultures and societies using methods and approaches drawn from the humanities, arts, social sciences, and sciences, all of which sharpen critical and evaluative skills. Religious beliefs, institutions, and practices are studied with emphasis placed on the critical problems and possibilities inherent in current theories, methods, and technologies.

The Department of Religious Studies offers both undergraduate (Bachelor of Arts) and graduate (Master of Arts) degrees. Undergraduates may pursue either a major or minor in the department; outstanding students may apply to the departmental honors program. Both the major and minor programs acquaint students with significant religious texts and traditions and with the cultures and societies in which these traditions are grounded. Majors are encouraged to participate in study abroad programs. Through the Reisacher Summer Fellowship program, majors and minors may apply for support for summer research projects and internships.

Where appropriate, courses are designed to utilize digital tools and other emerging technologies. Many courses also involve visits to the cultural institutions of University Circle and religious sites throughout greater Cleveland. Several 300-level courses may be taken for graduate credit by fulfilling additional course requirements. The Department of Religious Studies also contributes courses to and supports a number of the college’s interdisciplinary programs and centers, such as Asian Studies, Environmental Studies, Ethnic Studies, Women’s and Gender Studies, International Studies, and Judaic Studies.

The academic study of religion, combined with appropriate courses in other fields, provides an excellent background for any professional career that involves interaction with diverse populations—including law, engineering, medicine, and health care professions, journalism, and social work—and for graduate studies in a number of fields. A major in religious studies provides a well-rounded liberal arts education or can be combined conveniently with a second major. A minor in religious studies complements and broadens any field chosen as a major.

Department Faculty
Justine Howe, PhD
(Northwestern University)
Associate Professor and Chair; Armington Professor; Co-Director, Women’s and Gender Studies Program
Anthropology of religion; Islamic studies

Timothy Beal, PhD
(Emory University)
Florence Harkness Professor of Religion
Biblical studies; environmental studies; cultural studies; gender studies; religion and technology; machine learning and data science

Joy R. Bostic, PhD
(Union Theological Seminary)
Associate Professor; Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
African-American religion; women and religion; U.S. urban religion

Brian J. Clites, PhD
(Northwestern University)
Assistant Professor
American Religious History

Deepak Sarma, PhD
(University of Chicago)
Professor
Hinduism; Indian philosophy; philosophy of religion; method and theory

Jonathan Y. Tan, PhD
(The Catholic University of America)
Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan Professor in Catholic Studies; Associate Professor
Catholic Studies

Alanna Cooper, PhD
(Boston University)
Abba Hillel Silver Chair of Jewish Studies; Assistant Professor
Contemporary Jewish life; Jewish dispersion, loss, and memory; material culture; the American Jewish community

Emeriti
Alice Bach
Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan Professor Emerita of Catholic Studies

William E. Deal
Severance Professor in the History of Religion

Peter J. Haas
Abba Hillel Silver Professor Emeritus of Jewish Studies

Programs
• African and African American Studies, Minor
• Judaic Studies, Minor
• Religious Studies, BA
• Religious Studies, MA
• Religious Studies, Minor

Dual Degrees
• Undergraduate Programs toward Graduate or Professional Degrees