

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE

FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 5915S

Date of Senate Approval 03/19/15

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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

**APC Document 51 (RELS):** **Change the catalog description for Religious Studies**

**Effective Date: Fall 2015**

**1. Delete:** On page 257, the description for the Department of Religious Studies:

The Department of Religious Studies seeks to engage students in the study of religion as an academic discipline within the broader tradition of the liberal arts. As a field of humanistic inquiry, the study of religion at UNC Asheville investigates both the development and contemporary significance of the human religious experience from interdisciplinary perspectives that incorporate a variety of methodological approaches.

**Add:** On page 257, in place of deleted entry:

The Department of Religious Studies seeks to engage students in the study of religion as an academic discipline within the broader tradition of the liberal arts. As a field of humanistic inquiry, the study of religion at UNC Asheville investigates both the development and contemporary significance of the human religious experience from interdisciplinary perspectives that incorporate a variety of methodological approaches.

As is appropriate to its setting in a publicly supported university, the department is non-denominational and non-confessional. We do not advocate for or against any religion; rather students explore a diversity of religious traditions, including those that have influenced the development of “western” culture (primarily Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), the religions of East and South Asia, and indigenous and diasporic religious traditions as a means to examine the larger role of religion in human societies. Courses in Religious Studies are inherently multidisciplinary and stress the academic skills of critical inquiry and effective communication that are appropriate to a wide variety of careers and graduate study opportunities.

**Impact:** The expansion of the description will have no negative impact on the department or the university and will not require the addition of any new faculty or other resources.

**Rationale:** This change is really an addition to the current description which was written in 2009 prior to the establishment of the department and major. The addition offers more specific information about the content of the major as it has developed, as well as clarifying further that the program is academic and not a pre-professional degree in ministry.