

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number SD4222S
Date of Senate Approval 3/31/2022

Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

APC Document 37 (RELS): Change the requirements for the Religious Studies Major and Minor

Effective Date: Fall 2022

1. **Delete:** On pages 284-85, under the entry for Religious Studies:

Major in Religious Studies

- I. Required courses in the major—at least 36 hours, including: RELS 200, 398, 492; one course from those listed under Religion and Western Culture; one course from those listed under Religions of Asia and Africa; one course from those listed under Interdisciplinary Approaches to Religion; and 12 hours of electives chosen from other RELS courses or from the list of approved courses. 20 of the required 36 hours must be at the 300-400 level. The department chair may approve additional courses when the subject matter is appropriate to Religious Studies.
- II. Required courses outside the major—None.
- III. Other departmental requirements—Major competency is demonstrated in RELS 398. The course must be completed with a grade of C or higher.

Religion and Western Culture

CLAS	325	Topics in Ancient Life and Culture: Greek and Roman Religion (4)
CLAS	365	Introduction to the Hebrew Bible (4)
HIST	385	Islam in Historical Perspective (4)
LIT	369	World Literature: The Hebrew Bible (4)
PHIL	255	Medieval Philosophy (4)
PHIL	315	Islamic Philosophy (4)
RELS	215	Judaism and Christianity in the Ancient World (4)
RELS	312	Religion in America to 1865 (4)
RELS	315	Islamic Philosophy (4)
RELS	354	Greek and Roman Religion (4)
RELS	387	Religion and Culture of Judaism (4)
RELS	389	Jewish Women and Religion (4)

Religions of Africa and Asia

AFST	317	Africana Philosophy (4)
ASIA	313	Asian Philosophy (4)
PHIL	313	Asian Philosophy (4)
PHIL	317	Africana Philosophy (4)
RELS	280	Asian Religious Traditions (4)
RELS	326	Religion and Dance in South Asia (4)
RELS	342	African Religions in the Americas and the Caribbean (4)
RELS	381	Religions of South Asia (4)
RELS	386	Buddhism (4)

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Religion

CLAS	250	Mythology (4)
PHIL	303	Philosophy of Religion (4)
RELS	302	Sociology of Religion (4)
RELS	303	Philosophy of Religion (4)
RELS	330	Religion and Gender (4)
SOC	302	Sociology of Religion (4)

Additional Approved Courses

ASIA	101	Elementary Chinese I
CLAS	101	Latin I (4)
CLAS	103	Greek I (4)
CLAS	105	Hebrew I (3)

Add: On pages 284-85, in place of deleted entry:

Major in Religious Studies:

- I. Required courses in the major —at least 36 hours, including: RELS 398, 492; one Introductory course chosen from RELS 144, 145, or 146; one course from each of the three distribution categories listed below, and 12 hours of electives chosen from other RELS courses or from the list of approved courses. No more than 8 hours may come from a single department outside of Religious Studies, and at least 20 of the required 36 hours must be at the 300-400 level. A maximum of 8 hours from 100-level courses may be counted toward the major. The department chair may approve additional courses when the subject matter is appropriate to Religious Studies.
- II. Required courses outside the major—None.
- III. Other departmental requirements—Major competency is demonstrated in RELS 398. The course must be completed with a grade of C or higher.

Introductory Courses

RELS	144	Religion, Death, and Afterlife (4)
RELS	145	Sensing Religion: Body, Desire, and Emotion (4)
RELS	146	Religion and Horror (4)

Category I Courses

CLAS	215	Judaism and Christianity in the Ancient World (4)
CLAS	325	Topics in Ancient Life and Culture: Greek and Roman Religion (4)
CLAS	365	Introduction to the Hebrew Bible (4)
HIST	385	Islam in Historical Perspective (4)
LIT	369	World Literature: The Hebrew Bible (4)
PHIL	255	Medieval Philosophy (4)
PHIL	315	Islamic Philosophy (4)
RELS	215	Judaism and Christianity in the Ancient World (4)
RELS	312	Religion in America to 1865 (4)
RELS	313	Religion in America since 1865 (4)
RELS	315	Islamic Philosophy (4)
RELS	387	Religion and Culture of Judaism (4)
RELS	389	Jewish Women and Religion (4)

Category II Courses

AFST	317	Africana Philosophy (4)
ASIA	313	Asian Philosophy (4)
PHIL	313	Asian Philosophy (4)
PHIL	317	Africana Philosophy (4)
RELS	280	Asian Religious Traditions (4)
RELS	326	Religion and Dance in South Asia (4)
RELS	342	African Religions in the Americas and the Caribbean (4)
RELS	381	Religions of South Asia (4)
RELS	386	Buddhism (4)

Category III Courses

ANTH	380	Zen Anthropology (4)
ARTH	314	Art and Archaeology of Early Christianity (4)
ARTH	320	Medieval Art (4)
ARTH	335	Renaissance and Baroque Art (4)
ARTH	385	African Art (4)
ARTH	387	Islamic Art and Architecture (4)
CLAS	250	Mythology (4)
PHIL	217	Buddhist Philosophy (4)
PHIL	303	Philosophy of Religion (4)
RELS	302	Sociology of Religion (4)
RELS	303	Philosophy of Religion (4)
RELS	330	Religion and Gender (4)
SOC	302	Sociology of Religion (4)

Approved electives

ASIA	100	Elementary Chinese I (4)
CHER	110	Cherokee I (4)
LAT		101 Latin I (4)
GRK	101	Greek I (4)
HEB	101	Hebrew I (3)

2. **Delete:** On page 285, the entry under **Minor in Religious Studies:**

At least 20 hours distributed as follows: RELS 200; one course from those listed under Religion and Western Culture; one course from those listed under Religions of Asia and Africa; one course from those listed under Interdisciplinary Approaches to Religion; and at least one course chosen from RELS courses or from the list of approved courses. No more than 8 hours of approved electives may come from a single department outside of Religious Studies, and at least 12 hours must be at the 300-400 level. The department chair may approve additional courses when the subject matter is appropriate to Religious Studies.

Add: On page 285, in place of deleted entry:

At least 20 hours distributed as follows: one Introductory course chosen from RELS 144, 145, or 146; one course from each of the three distribution categories listed above (no single course may count for more than one category), and 4 hours of electives chosen from other RELS courses or from the list of approved courses. No more than 4 hours may come from a single department outside of Religious Studies, and at least 12 hours must be at the 300-400 level. The department chair may approve additional courses when the subject matter is appropriate to Religious Studies.

Impact: These changes will have no negative impact on the faculty or other resources of the department or the university, nor will they delay student progress toward completion of a degree; in fact, by expanding our approved list of courses students will gain more opportunities to complete major and minor requirements in a timelier fashion and with fewer requested substitutions. The RELS 14X series replaces RELS 200, which all faculty have been regularly teaching in rotation. As has been the case with RELS 200, at least one RELS 14X course will be offered every semester. Overall, these changes will increase student flexibility and expand student access to diverse methodologies by drawing on courses taught across the university. The department will be able to deliver this curriculum while continuing to support its LAC commitments.

Rationale: The Department of Religious Studies is revising its curriculum for the following reasons: (1) to respond to an external review that recommended a more contemporary and topical approach to our gateway course; (2) to better meet the needs of first-year students and their retention through creating 100 level courses; (3) to expand and diversify interdisciplinary course offerings; and (4) to update course descriptions to reflect better course content and to eliminate problematic vocabulary. The change from descriptive titles for our three distribution areas to the more generalized “Category I,” etc. reflects the concerns of the larger academy to eliminate distinctions based on outmoded terminology (e.g., “western” religions). The expansion of Category III will give more choices to students from interdisciplinary offerings that include methods and content related to the study of religion but not taught by departmental faculty. Because of the overall amount of choice, none of the classes from other departments require a firm commitment to being offered on a certain rotation.