

## Religion and Philosophy: Religious Studies Concentration

Religious studies exposes you to the world's major belief systems and philosophies. PC offers a religion and philosophy major with a concentration in religious studies. You don't need to consider yourself "religious" in order to benefit from the degree. Religious studies helps you understand global issues and cultural trends. And your coursework prepares you for graduate school and a variety of fields, including business and education.

Your professors bring a breadth of experience, with specialties in Bible and philosophy, social activism, and ethics and theology. Outside the classroom, experiences like studying abroad, researching in the field and volunteering in the community expand your learning opportunities.

## What You'll Study When You Concentrate in Religious Studies

Understanding what and why others believe allows you to better connect and communicate in a diverse world. A global perspective is highly valued in the workplace, whether you work in secular or religious environments. Your degree in religious studies also gives you a well-rounded liberal arts education and transferable skills like research and writing.

The religious studies concentration totals 36 hours of coursework. During your first two years, you'll take World Religions and Religion and Human Experience. You'll also choose one social sciences course, like Introduction to Anthropology or Social Movements. The 15 hours of electives allow you to shape your coursework to your interests. As a senior, you'll demonstrate your skills in research, writing and presentation through a capstone project. If eligible, you may also conduct an honors project, which earns you marks of distinction on your transcript and diploma.

The department also offers concentrations in philosophy, Christian studies and Christian education.

## Religious Studies Careers

Earning a religious studies degree shows that you have a wide knowledge of world cultures and faith traditions. Some religious studies graduates go on to work as church ministers or teachers, but others work outside the church. Many find jobs that require

cultural sensitivity and awareness, in fields like government and social work. They may also work in humanitarian organizations and other nonprofits.

According to [PayScale](#), a bachelor's degree in religious studies earns you an average salary of \$55,521, as of December 2019. [Data USA](#) includes graduate degrees and places the average wage for religious studies majors much higher – at \$84,999.

Recent graduates from PC's religion and philosophy department have pursued careers in law and medicine. Alumni also serve churches in various ways, from youth camps to social ministries. Many earn advanced degrees through religious studies programs at some of the country's finest universities, including Princeton and Duke. No matter your major, PC's liberal arts education prepares you with problem-solving, critical thinking and other soft skills employers look for.

## Student Experiences

At PC, learning isn't confined to classrooms. Whatever your major, you'll have opportunities to learn outside the classroom and away from campus.

- **Studying abroad.** PC offers programs through which you may study abroad for a summer, semester or an entire year. Immersive trips to places like Turkey, Nepal, China, Ireland, Egypt, Israel and Spain connect you to ancient cultures and belief traditions.
- **Summer Fellows Program.** You can work together with your professors on a summer project and receive a stipend for participating in the program.
- **Independent research.** You can conduct independent research during the regular academic year on a topic of your choice.
- **Internships.** An internship provides you with hands-on experience in a position focused on Christian ministry. It can serve as a means to fulfill general education credit and/or as a means to explore career options.

In addition to these campuswide opportunities, other extracurricular activities are available to you as a religious studies student.

- **Religious groups.** You can explore your faith and meet kindred spirits in campus religious life groups like Catholic Student Association, FCA, and Ukirk.
- **Volunteering.** Student Volunteer Services provides opportunities for you to help those in need in the community.
- **Residential community.** The Nest is not just a residence hall – it's a living community that roots its identity in the Christian faith.

## Fast Facts

1. The Department of Religion and Philosophy at PC accepts students from all faith traditions.
2. Religion and philosophy professors represent respected seminaries like Princeton and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, and the nonprofit Jerusalem Center for Biblical Studies.
3. Joan Gray '73 served as moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 2006 and subsequently as the denomination's ambassador-at-large.
4. You may pursue a religion and philosophy degree even if you don't consider yourself "religious."

## Meta Page Description

Presbyterian College's degree in religious studies offers you a global perspective as it equips you with critical thinking and other soft skills.