

The Religion & Philosophy: Christian Studies Major

If you have a strong commitment to serve the Christian Church – whether you're Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox – the religion and philosophy major, with a concentration in Christian studies, is for you. Through your coursework, you'll learn the breadth and depth of the Christian tradition. This degree equips you to serve as a pastor, lead a church educational program or be a missionary. If graduate school is your educational goal, this major puts you ahead of your peers in religious studies, particularly divinity.

Your professors have strong backgrounds in theology, biblical studies and linguistics. Outside the classroom, experiences like studying abroad, church internships and volunteering in the community expand your learning opportunities.

What You'll Study When You Concentrate in Christian Studies

In the religion and philosophy department at PC, you receive a well-rounded liberal arts education. You also develop skills – like research, writing and critical thinking – that apply to a range of careers. The Christian studies major prepares you for ministry as you gain a solid foundation in biblical theology, ethics and basic philosophy.

The major requirements total 33 hours of coursework. During your first two years you'll take Old or New Testament and Church History or Mission courses. Your final two years include courses like Classical Greek Philosophy and Approaches to the Study of Religion. The 12 hours of electives allow you to study relevant topics that interest you. 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.

With its strong network of churches in the region, the department can also connect you to ministry and internship opportunities.

Experiences Outside the Classroom

At PC, learning isn't confined to classrooms. No matter 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 Christian 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.

Career Outcomes

With a bachelor's in Christian studies, you can work as a pastor, chaplain or nonprofit program director. In addition to strong foundations in Bible and philosophy, you take away valuable skills in verbal and written communication. The major also prepares you for graduate school, as some senior pastor and clergy positions require additional schooling.

According to [PayScale](#), those with a bachelor's in Christian studies earned an average salary of \$41,000 in December 2019. [O*NET OnLine](#) estimated a median salary of \$48,990 for professional clergy in 2018.

Christian studies alumni from PC now pastor congregations around the country – such as First Presbyterian Church of Dallas. They serve as missionaries internationally in countries like Japan. They have led entire denominations, such as the alumnus elected as moderator of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 2006. Many go on to earn advanced degrees from some of the country's finest seminaries. No matter your major, PC's liberal arts education prepares you with problem-solving, critical thinking and other soft skills employers look for.

Fast Facts

1. The Department of Religion and Philosophy at PC welcomes students of all faiths and beliefs.
2. Joan Gray '73 served as moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 2006 and then as the denomination's ambassador-at-large.
3. Religion and philosophy professors represent respected seminaries like Princeton and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, and the nonprofit Jerusalem Center for Biblical Studies.
4. Amos Disasa '01 serves as pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Dallas, one of the country's largest Presbyterian churches.

Meta Page Description

The Christian studies major at Presbyterian College equips you for full-time ministry with a solid foundation in biblical theology.