

# DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

## Introduction

The Department of Religious Studies is dedicated to the study of religions as historical, social, and cultural phenomena. We offer courses on Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Indigenous religions, ancient religions, and a variety of traditions across the globe. Our faculty employ diverse and interdisciplinary methods to better understand the rituals, texts, celebrations, pilgrimages, beliefs, and everyday practices that constitute religious lives.

## Advising

The director of undergraduate studies advises majors and minors in religious studies. Please contact the Department of Religious Studies for updated contact information.

The director of the Carolina Center for Jewish studies advises majors and minors in Jewish studies. Please contact the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies for updated contact information.

The director of Christianity and culture advises minors in the study of Christianity and culture. Please contact the Department of Religious Studies for updated contact information.

The director of the Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations advises minors in Islamic and Middle Eastern studies. Please contact the Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations for updated contact information.

## Career Opportunities and Graduate School

Students majoring and minoring in religious studies pursue careers in a wide variety of fields, including public service, ministry, consulting, medical and legal professions, business, artistic endeavors, and work in the non-profit sector. The department offers regular opportunities for career exploration and networking that provide tangible guidance on how to connect the knowledge and skills we teach to today's job market. Religious studies majors learn to appreciate cultural differences, understand changing global realities, synthesize complex information, write clearly, and speak persuasively. All of these qualities are in great demand. Many graduates of the program also go on to professional schools in law, medicine, divinity, public health, business, library and information science, and journalism. Other students choose to pursue an M.A. or Ph.D. in religious studies or related fields in the humanities and social sciences. Each year the department awards several prizes, including the Bernard Boyd Fellowship to support a graduating religious studies major who is planning to pursue graduate study in religion or a closely related discipline.

### Majors

- Religious Studies Major, B.A. (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/religious-studies-major-ba/>)
- Religious Studies Major, B.A. – Jewish Studies Concentration (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/religious-studies-major-ba-jewish-studies-concentration/>)

### Minors

- Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies Minor (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/islamic-middle-eastern-studies-minor/>)
- Jewish Studies Minor (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/jewish-studies-minor/>)
- Religious Studies Minor (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/religious-studies-minor/>)
- Study of Christianity and Culture Minor (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/study-christianity-culture-minor/>)

### Graduate Programs

- M.A. in Religious Studies (<https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/religious-studies/>)
- Ph.D. in Religious Studies (<https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/religious-studies/>)

### Courses

- Religious Studies (RELI) (<https://catalog.unc.edu/courses/reli/>)
- Jewish Studies (JWST) (<https://catalog.unc.edu/courses/jwst/>)

## Professors

Barbara Ambros, Yaakov Ariel, Bart D. Ehrman, Juliane Hammer, Jodi Magness, Evyatar Marienberg, Todd Ramón Ochoa, Zlatko Ples#e.

## Associate Professors

Andrea Cooper, Brandon Bayne, Jessica Boon, Joseph Lam, David Lambert, Lauren Leve, Hugo Méndez, Randall Styers, Brendan Thornton.

## Assistant Professors

Youssef Carter, Eden Consenstein, Abelardo de la Cruz, Maharshi Vyas.

## Adjunct Professors

Cemil Aydin, Philip F. Gura, Charles Kurzman, David Morgan (Duke), James B. Rives, Omid Safi (Duke University).

## Adjunct Associate Professors

Anna Bigelow (Stanford University), Christian Lundberg, Barry Saunders, Margaret J. Wiener, Joseph Winters (Duke), Molly Worthen.

## Professors Emeriti

Carl W. Ernst, David J. Halperin, Peter I. Kaufman, Laurie Maffly-Kipp, Jack Sasson, John Van Seters.

## Contact Information

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### Chair

Barbara Ambros

### Director of Undergraduate Studies

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