A central mission of the Religion Department is to enable students to become critically informed, independent, and creative interpreters of some of the religious movements, sacred texts, ideas, and practices that have decisively shaped human experience. In their coursework, students develop skills in the critical analysis of the sacred texts, images, beliefs, and performances of various religions, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. The department’s programs are designed to help students understand how religions develop and change and how religious texts, symbols, and rituals help constitute communities and cultures. Thus, the major in religion seeks to help students develop a coherent set of academic skills in the study of religion, while at the same time encouraging interdisciplinary work in the humanities and social sciences.

**LEARNING GOALS**
The Haverford religion major is unique in that it provides students with a comprehensive curriculum that includes carefully designed areas of concentrations, specialized coursework, supervised research, a lengthy written research product, and a departmental oral conversation with the entire department as the minimum requirements for fulfilling the major. Through coursework, senior thesis research, and the Tri-College Senior Colloquium with Swarthmore and Bryn Mawr Colleges, the department seeks to fulfill the following learning goals:

- Expose students to the central ideas, debates, scholars, methods, historiography, and approaches to the academic study of religion.
- Analyze key terms and categories in the study of religion, and utilize the diverse vocabularies deployed among a range of scholars in religion and related fields.
- Develop critical thinking, analytical writing, and sustained engagement in theory and method, together with the critical competence to engage sacred texts, images, ideas and practices.
- Cultivate the learning environment as an integrative and collaborative process.
- Expand intellectual opportunities for students to broaden and critically assess their worldviews.
- Encourage students to supplement their work in religion with elective languages (Arabic, Chinese, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi/Urdu, Japanese, Latin, Sanskrit, Yoruba).
- Foster interdisciplinary methods and perspectives in the study of religion, while continuing to model this through the curriculum.
- Prepare students for professional careers, for graduate studies in religion or related fields, and for leadership roles as reflective, critically-aware human beings.

Like other liberal arts majors, the religion major is meant to prepare students for a broad array of vocational possibilities. Religion majors typically find careers in law, public service (including both religious and secular organizations), medicine, business, ministry, and education. Religion majors have also pursued advanced graduate degrees in anthropology, history, political science, biology, Near Eastern studies, and religious studies.

**MAJOR REQUIREMENTS**
The major in religion is designed to help students develop a coherent set of academic skills and expertise in the study of religion, while at the same time encouraging interdisciplinary work in the humanities and social sciences. The major consists of 11 courses with the following requirements:

- Five courses within an area of concentration: each major is expected to fashion a coherent major program focused around work in one of three designated areas of concentration:
  - **Religious Traditions in Cultural Context.** The study of religious traditions and the textual, historical, sociological and cultural contexts in which they develop. Critical analysis of formative texts and issues that advance our notions of religious identities, origins, and ideas.
  - **Religion, Literature, and Representation.** The study of religion in relation to literary expressions and other forms of representation, such as performance, music, film, and the plastic arts.
  - **Religion, Ethics, and Society.** The exploration of larger social issues such as race, gender, and identity as they relate to religion and religious traditions. Examines how moral principles, cultural values, and
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ethical conduct help to shape human societies.

The five courses within the area of concentration must include at least one department seminar at the 300 level. Where appropriate and relevant to the major’s program, up to two courses for the major may be drawn from outside the field of religion, subject to departmental approval.

- RELG 299 (Theoretical Perspectives in the Study of Religion).
- RELG 398A and 399B, a two-semester senior seminar and thesis program.
- Three additional half-year courses drawn from outside the major’s area of concentration.
- Junior Colloquium: an informal required gathering of the junior majors once each semester. Students should complete a worksheet in advance in consultation with their major adviser and bring copies of the completed worksheet to the meeting.
- At least six of each major’s 11 courses must be taken in the Haverford Religion Department.
- In some rare cases, students may petition the department for exceptions to the major requirements. Such petitions must be presented to the department for approval in advance.
- Final evaluation of the major program will consist of written work, including a thesis, and an oral examination completed in the context of the Senior Seminar (RELG 398A and 399B).

Advising for the major takes place in individual meetings between majors and faculty advisers and in a departmental colloquium held once each semester. At this colloquium, majors will present their proposed programs of study with particular attention to their work in the area of concentration. All majors should fill out and bring the Religion Major Worksheet, which can be found on the Religion Department website, to the colloquium.

MINOR REQUIREMENTS

The minor in religion, like the major, is designed to help students develop a coherent set of academic skills and expertise in the study of religion, while at the same time encouraging interdisciplinary work in the humanities and social sciences. The minor consists of six courses with the following requirements:

- Five courses within an area of concentration, with at least one at the 300 level:
  - Religious Traditions in Cultural Context. The study of religious traditions and the textual, historical, sociological and cultural contexts in which they develop. Critical analysis of formative texts and issues that advance our notions of religious identities, origins, and ideas.
  - Religion, Literature, and Representation. The study of religion in relation to literary expressions and other forms of representation, such as performance, music, film, and the plastic arts.
  - Religion, Ethics, and Society. The exploration of larger social issues such as race, gender, and identity as they relate to religion and religious traditions. Examines how moral principles, cultural values, and ethical conduct help to shape human societies.
- RELG 299 (Theoretical Perspectives in the Study of Religion).
- Junior Colloquium: an informal required gathering of the junior majors once each semester. Students should complete a worksheet, available on the Religion Department website, in advance in consultation with their major adviser and bring copies of the completed worksheet to the meeting.
- All six courses must be taken in the Haverford Religion Department. In some rare cases, students may petition the department for exceptions to the minor requirements. Such petitions must be presented to the department for approval in advance.

SENIOR PROJECT

The senior thesis research project in the Department of Religion serves as a capstone experience for our majors. The work of RELG 398A and 399B, the required courses related to the senior research project in religion, consists of five stages: the formulation of a thesis proposal; presentation of the proposal; presentation of a portion of work in progress; the writing and submission of first and final drafts; oral discussion with department faculty.

Senior Project Learning Goals

The goals of the senior thesis process are to:
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- further develop research skills and obtain a mastery of academic citation practices.
- provide students with an opportunity to pursue original research questions and to sharpen scholarly interests as one masters a particular field/argument.
- enhance written and verbal analysis through participation in the yearlong senior seminar with department faculty and students, weekly meetings with individual advisers, and the final oral presentation of the thesis to the department.
- nurture group cohesion as a department, through collaborative participation with fellow majors during the course of RELG 398a and 399b, concretely expressed by way of critical feedback to shared writing.
- build student confidence in the ability to see to fruition a rigorous project requiring prolonged periods of thought, writing, revising, and research.

Senior Project Assessment
You will receive a regular course grade for RELG 399b, which will appear on your transcript. This overall grade is comprised of three separate grades that evaluate:

- Your participation in the seminar process outlined above.
  - Participation in the seminar means: punctual attendance at all seminar events; careful preparation, especially the reading of your colleagues’ work in progress; and regular meetings with your adviser and submission of writing, according to the schedule mutually agreed upon.
- The quality of your thesis.
  - Your thesis will be read by all members of the department, who will mutually agree upon a grade for the written thesis. This grade will be averaged and factored into your final grade for the thesis and seminar after the oral.
- The effectiveness of your oral exam.
  - The effectiveness of your oral discussion will be factored into the final grade for the thesis and for the seminar as a whole. All members of the department will participate in your oral discussion, but your adviser will not participate in the process of the final evaluation and grading of your work.

REQUIREMENTS FOR HONORS
The department awards honors and high honors in religion on the basis of the quality of work in the major and on the completed thesis.

STUDY ABROAD
Students planning to study abroad must construct their programs in advance with the department. Students seeking religion credit for abroad courses must write a formal petition to the department upon their return and submit all relevant course materials. We advise students to petition courses that are within the designated area of concentration.

FACULTY
Kenneth Koltun-Fromm
Chair and Professor

Naomi Koltun-Fromm
Associate Professor

Anne McGuire
Kies Family Associate Professor in the Humanities

Molly Farneth
Assistant Professor

Terrance Wiley
Assistant Professor

Kameliya Atanasova
Visiting Assistant Professor

COURSES
RELGH101 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION
Kenneth Koltun-Fromm
An introduction to the study of religion from three perspectives: overviews of several religions with classroom discussion of primary sources; cross-cultural features common to many religions; theories of religion and approaches to its study and interpretation. Humanities (HU)

RELGH104 RELIGION AND SOCIAL ETHICS
Molly Farneth
Introduces students to debates in Judaism and Christianity about the ethical significance of race, class, and gender in contemporary society. Topics will include racism, incarceration, poverty, gender-
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based domination, and same-sex marriage.

Humanities (HU)

RELGH107 VOCABULARIES OF ISLAM
Staff
Provides students with an introduction to the foundational concepts of Islam, its religious institutions, and the diverse ways in which Muslims understand and practice their religion. We explore the vocabularies surrounding core issues of scripture, prophethood, law, ritual, theology, mysticism, literature, and art from the early period to the present. Humanities (HU)

RELGH110 SACRED TEXTS AND RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS
Anne McGuire
An introduction to religion through the close reading of selected sacred texts of various religious traditions in their historical, literary, philosophical, and religious contexts. Humanities (HU)

RELGH118 HEBREW BIBLE: LITERARY TEXT AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT
Naomi Koltun-Fromm
The Hebrew Bible, which is fundamental to both Judaism and Christianity, poses several challenges to modern readers. Who wrote it, when, and why? What was its significance then and now? How does one study the Bible from an academic point of view? Using literary, historical, theological, and archeological interpretive tools, this course will address these questions and introduce students to academic biblical studies. Humanities (HU)

RELGH122 INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT
Anne McGuire
An introduction to the New Testament and early Christian literature. Special attention will be given to the Jewish origins of the Jesus movement, the development of traditions about Jesus in the earliest Christian communities, and the social contexts and functions of various texts. Readings will include non-canonical writings, in addition to the writings of the New Testament canon. Humanities (HU)

RELGH144 READING COMICS AND RELIGION
Kenneth Koltun-Fromm
The exploration of how notions of the religious arise in comics and graphic novels that visually depict narratives of and about the sacred. Reading comics is a visual practice, but it is also a study in religious expression, creative imagination, and critical interpretation. The course will engage the multi-textured layers of religious traditions through a reading of comics, and thereby integrate comics within the study of religion even as the very reading of comics challenges our notions of what counts as religion. This is a Tri-Co course and requires travel to Swarthmore. Lecture will alternate between Haverford and Swarthmore campuses. Humanities (HU)

RELGH150 SOUTH ASIAN RELIGIOUS CULTURES
Staff
An introductory course covering the variegated expressions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, and Sikhism in South Asia. Humanities (HU)

RELGH201 INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM
Staff
Focusing on the East Asian Buddhist tradition, the course examines Buddhist philosophy, doctrine and practice as textual traditions and as lived religion. Crosslisted: EALC; Humanities (HU)

RELGH215 THE LETTERS OF PAUL
Anne McGuire
Close reading of the 13 letters attributed to the apostle Paul and critical examination of the place of Paul in the development of early Christianity. Humanities (HU)

RELGH221 WOMEN AND GENDER IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY
Anne McGuire
An examination of the representation of women and gender in the New Testament and other early Christian literature, with attention to their historical and contemporary significance. A special focus will be the representation of female figures in early Christian literature, including Eve, Mary, Mary Magdalene, Thecia, Sophia, Perpetua, and others. Social Science (SO)

RELGH222 GNOSTICISM
Anne McGuire
The phenomenon of Gnosticism examined through close reading of primary sources, including the recently discovered texts of Nag Hammadi. Topics include the relation of Gnosticism to Greek, Jewish, and Christian thought; the variety of Gnostic schools and sects; gender imagery, mythology and
other issues in the interpretation of Gnostic texts. Humanities (HU)

RELGH230 RELIGION AND BLACK FREEDOM STRUGGLE
Terrance Wiley
This course will examine the background for and the key events, figures, philosophies, tactics, and consequences of the modern black freedom struggle in the United States. The period from 1955-1965 will receive special attention, but the roots of the freedom struggle and the effect on recent American political, social, and cultural history will also be considered. Humanities (HU)

RELGH240 HISTORY AND PRINCIPLES OF QUAKERISM
Emma Lapsansky
The development of Quakerism and its relationship to other religious movements and to political and social life, especially in America. The roots of the Society of Friends in 17th-century Britain, and the expansion of Quaker influences among Third World populations, particularly the Native American, Hispanic, east African, and Asian populations. Social Science (SO)

RELGH248 THE QURAN
Staff
Overview of the Qur’an, the scripture of Islam. Major themes include: orality, textuality, sanctity and material culture; revelation, translation, and inimitability; calligraphy, bookmaking and architecture, along with modes of scriptural exegesis as practiced over time by both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Crosslisted: Comparative Literature; Humanities (HU)

RELGH254 RAP AND RELIGION: RHYMES ABOUT GOD AND THE GOOD
Terrance Wiley
We will explore the origins, existential, and ethical dimensions of Rhythm and Poetry (RAP) music. Giving attention to RAP songs written and produced by African American artists, including Tupac, Nas, Jay-Z, The Roots, and Lauryn Hill, Kanye West, we will analyze their work with an interest in understanding a) the conceptions of God and the good reflected in them, b) how these conceptions connect to and reflect African American social and cultural practices, and c) how the conceptions under consideration change over time. Humanities (HU)

RELGH257 THE YOGA TRADITION IN SOUTH ASIA AND BEYOND
Staff
Surveys the history of yoga practice and thought from the earliest textual discussions of yoga until the present day. Topics include the development of hatha yoga, Islam and yoga, and the influence of colonialism and nationalism on modern yoga. Humanities (HU)

RELGH258 GENDER AND POWER IN MODERN JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN THOUGHT
Molly Farneth
An exploration of gender in Judaism and Christianity through a study of feminist and queer thinkers who critique and contribute to these traditions. Topics include sex/gender difference, the gender of God, and the nature of divine authority. Prerequisite(s): familiarity with philosophical and/or theoretical inquiry is recommended. Humanities (HU)

RELGH260 GETTING MEDIEVAL
Staff
Explores literary and philosophical exchanges, alongside religious violence and persecution, amongst Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Humanities (HU)

RELGH280 ETHICS AND THE GOOD LIFE
Molly Farneth
This course examines how ethical theories, both secular and religious, inform notions of the good. We begin by tracing the impact of classical conceptions of justice and the good life through close readings from Plato, Aristotle and the tragedians together with medieval and modern accounts that draw heavily from these sources. We conclude by investigating how some contemporary Christian and Jewish ethical thinkers rely on, revise or subvert the perspectives of classical ethics. Humanities (HU)

RELGH286 RELIGION AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC LIFE
Molly Farneth
This course examines the role of Christianity in shaping America’s religious identity(ies) and democratic imagination(s). The course will also examine whether, if at all, citizens are justified in retrieving their religious commitments in public debates. Humanities (HU)
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RELGH299 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION
Kenneth Koltun-Fromm, Molly Farneth
An introduction to theories of the nature and function of religion from theological, philosophical, psychological, anthropological, and sociological perspectives. Readings may include: Schleiermacher, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Tylor, Durkheim, Weber, James, Otto, Benjamin, Eliade, Geertz, Foucault, Douglas, Smith, Berger, and Haraway. Humanities (HU)

RELGH305 SEMINAR IN RELIGION, ETHICS, AND SOCIETY: RELIGION, MAGIC & ORIENTALISM
Staff
The exploration of larger social issues such as race, gender, and identity as they relate to religion and religious traditions. Examines how moral principles, cultural values, and ethical conduct help to shape human societies. Topics and instructors change from year to year. This seminar invites students to attend to lived religious experience through ethnography. Taking an explicitly feminist/womanist approach, students will examine themes of epistemology, hermeneutics, narration, representation, embodiment, and empowerment. Reading and viewing contemporary ethnographic essays, texts and documentaries highlights mixed method approaches to research formation and the writing process. Through daily exercises and a final research project, students will directly participate in reflexive ethnography with a religious community of their choice. Prerequisite(s): one 100-level in the department or permission of the instructor; Humanities (HU)

RELGH306 OF MONSTERS AND MARVELS
Staff
From contemplating the cosmos to encountering the monstrous, this course explores the place of wonder in Islamic traditions through readings from the Qur'an, exegesis, prophetic traditions, popular literature, travel narratives, descriptive geography, philosophy and theology. Social Science (SO)

RELGH308 MYSTICAL LITERATURES OF ISLAM
Staff
Overview of the literary expressions of Islamic mysticism through the study of poetry, philosophy, hagiographies, and anecdotes. Topics include: unio mystica; symbol and structure; love and the erotic; body/gender; language and experience. Humanities (HU)

RELGH312 RITUAL AND THE BODY
Molly Farneth
An exploration of the meaning and function of ritual, and of the ways that rituals shape bodies, habits, and identities. Special attention will be given to the relationship between ritual and gender. Readings include Durkheim, Mauss, Bourdieu, Butler, and Mahmood. Prerequisite(s): at least one 200-level in the department or permission of the instructor; Humanities (HU)

RELGH319 BLACK QUEER SAINTS: SEX, GENDER, RACE, CLASS AND THE QUEST FOR LIBERATION
Terrance Wiley
Drawing on fiction, biography, critical theory, film, essays, and memoirs, participants will explore how certain African American artists, activists, and religionists have resisted, represented, and reinterpreted sex, sexuality, and gender norms in the context of capitalist, white supremacist, male supremacist, and heteronormative cultures. Crosslisted: Africana Studies; Prerequisite(s): one 200-level humanities course; Humanities (HU)

RELGH361 HINDUS AND MUSLIMS IN SOUTH ASIA
Staff
Examines engagements between Hindus and Muslims in South Asia from medieval to modern times, through an exploration of historical and literary texts, film and art, and theoretical writings on religious identities. Introduces historical case studies of Hindu-Muslim relations, the formation of religious identities, and the ways in which these identities have been constructed and contested in modern discourses on religion and politics. Humanities (HU)

RELGH398 SENIOR THESIS SEMINAR PART 1
Naomi Koltun-Fromm
A practical methodology course that prepares senior religion majors to write their senior theses. Prerequisite(s): open to senior religion majors only; Humanities (HU)
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RELGH399 SENIOR SEMINAR AND THESIS

Naomi Koltun-Fromm

Prerequisite(s): open to senior religion majors only; Humanities (HU)