Advising Plan for Prospective Majors and Minors

The Religion Major

A Religion major requires nine courses. It has the following components: (1) a common set of five courses (201, 204, 211, 215, 224) from which four are required; (2) a concentration of at least three courses in designated areas; (3) a seminar for majors and minors only, designed around special topics that will be in a concentration area; one elective course, which may be a fifth core course; and (5) a comprehensive examination with take-home and in-class components. First-Year Seminars taught by a member of the department may count toward a concentration. For a list of current courses in the three pre-approved concentrations, see the Religion Department home page. A major may also design a concentration with the help of his or her Religion Department advisor. Ordinarily, no more than one course at the 100-level, for first-year and sophomore students, may count toward the major or minor. One 100-level course may count toward the concentration. One semester of a year-long Senior Research Project may count toward the nine-course requirement, and toward a concentration.

The Religion Minor

A Religion minor consists of (1) a common set of five courses (201, 204, 211, 215, 224) from which four are required; (2) a seminar for majors and minors only, designed around special topics; (3) an elective course; and (4) an abbreviated comprehensive examination.

Entering the Religion Major or Minor

There is no single gateway into the Religion major or minor. Students have entered the program through a wide array of courses. Nor is there any expectation that courses are vertically sequenced in terms of content.

100-level Religion courses are available only to first- and second-year students. Therefore, most students enter the program through either a 100-level Religion course, or a W-101 taught by a member of the Religion Department. The following are the Religion 100-level courses:

- REL-101, Introduction to Theology
- REL-102, Ethics, Society and the Moral Self
- REL-103, World Religions
- REL-104, Religions in India
- REL-105, Buddhism
- REL-108, Bible, Gender and Sexuality
- REL-109, Introduction to American Religions
- W-101, Bible and Gender

Upper-level Courses

200-level courses are normally available only to sophomores, juniors and seniors. If a student has taken a 100-level Religion course in the first semester of the first year, s/he can take a 200-level course in the second semester with the consent of the instructor. In exceptional cases, and with the approval of a Religion faculty member, a student can take a 200-level course in the first semester of the first year.

Since normally only one 100-level course can be counted toward the major or minor, we strongly encourage students considering Religion to take a 200-level course for their second course. We encourage students to take one of the five core courses as a second course in Religion.

Religion Department Advisor

All students who decide to major or minor in Religion are required to have a Religion faculty member as an advisor. Working with a Religion advisor is an essential component of navigating the Religion major or minor, a possible second major or minor, and possible off campus study. While each core course is taught once annually, most other Religion courses are taught only on a two- or three-year cycle. The Religion advisor can help the student map out when to take courses in the concentration chosen by the student.