

## **Religion**

### **Academic Learning Compact**

#### **Religion AOC Outcomes**

The religion program at New College aims to develop an understanding about the importance of religious traditions, ideals, and practices in history, and the critical role religion plays in society. The expected outcomes for our religion AOC students are:

1. First, to develop a depth of understanding of various religious traditions, including their history, ideas, and practices.
2. Second, students will develop empathetic insight into the fundamental ideas and values of other peoples, times, and places which are key to any effective communication with those outside one's own culture and time.
3. Third, to foster critical self-consciousness about the values and commitments of one's own age and society and thus learn about the historically developed content of one's own culture as well as that of others.

Through a combination of introductory courses, advanced seminars, and courses offered in cooperation with other disciplines, the Religion program works towards the goals of nurturing critical thinking, effective communication skills, and content knowledge. For advanced students, the present faculty in religion offers intensive work in philosophical issues in religious thought, method in the study of religion, religious texts, and religious ethics. Strong attention is given to historical study, analysis of the relationship between religion and society, and in-depth study of key thinkers and traditional problems in religion. Faculty in allied fields and visiting faculty provide additional opportunities to pursue diverse traditions and approaches.

#### **AOC/Joint AOC in Religion**

Although prospective majors in religion should consult with faculty to construct an individualized plan of study, an Area of Concentration in Religion normally requires 10-12 courses, including the following:

1. an introduction to the study of religion to engage the central ideas of the discipline;
2. coverage of the history and development of a particular religious tradition such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, or Buddhism. This would require 3-4 classes for AOC and 2-3 for joint AOC.
3. study in a tradition distinctly different from one's major focus. This would require 2-3 classes for AOC and 1-2 for joint AOC.
4. work in a variety of approaches to the study of religion, including conceptual approaches to the study of religion (Theory and Methods class), religion in society and ethics;
5. expansion of content knowledge including exploration of the sacred scriptures of a religious tradition;
6. Senior Seminar

#### **Measures to track student progress**

During the first module of a student's fifth academic semester, the student will consult with a member of the faculty in Religion to determine what work in the concentration has been done and what remains. This meeting will emphasize the student's skills at communicating the coherence of the student's program of study. With the agreement of a second faculty member in

Religion to the proposed plan of study, the student will submit an Area of Concentration form in Religion.

### **Graduate Competencies and Senior Thesis**

In the sixth academic semester, the student must present a thesis proposal to the faculty in Religion once again fostering the student's ability to communicate the coherence of the chosen topic. This proposal may serve as the basis for an oral examination by the faculty to determine the viability of the project. With the approval of the thesis committee, the student will submit the Thesis Prospectus and write a thesis under the direction of one of the faculty in Religion. The thesis project and baccalaureate exam will further develop the student's critical thinking skills, communication skills, and display the specific content knowledge germane to the chosen topic.