Religious Studies

> If I headed back to college today, I would major in comparative religions rather than political science.
>
> John Kerry, *former U.S. Secretary of State,* "Religion and Diplomacy"

Religion is a major source of inspiration, meaning, and controversy in human societies. Fast-moving forces of globalization, migration, and technology continue to bring diverse communities into closer proximity, often creating new religious communities in the process. The Religious Studies program at Washington University gives students the opportunity to learn about diverse religions as well as to study past and current events with a critical but open mind.

Religious Studies covers a wide range of subjects. It could include religion and American or international politics, religion and music, unbelief, religion and literature, issues of race or climate change, or scriptural studies. As such, Religious Studies embraces research in all its disciplinary and interdisciplinary complexity. Courses offered by our program are, thus, taught by faculty from a variety of disciplines and areas, including the Danforth Center on Religion and Politics; Anthropology; Classics; East Asian Languages and Cultures; English; History; Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern Studies; Music; Political Science; and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Pursuing a major in Religious Studies will help students understand and appreciate the complex ways in which religious traditions inform human thought and behavior. A double major or a minor will also enhance a broad range of studies, from politics and law to business and medicine. If a student is preparing for the advanced academic study of religion, seeking to complement another area of study, or simply feeling the need to acquire a greater knowledge of religions, a major or minor in Religious Studies is excellent preparation for living and working in a pluralistic society and global culture.

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